

2,000 RAILWAY INSURANCE £2,000.

REAL GOVERN-
STATEMENT:
Cover the
STEUR
(numbered)
FILTER
applied Typhoid
disappeared.



Filter awarded
Gold Medal Paris, 1900.
J. DEWINE & SONS LTD.,
147 New Bond Street, E.C.

PEARSON'S

**TO INTEREST,
TO ELEVATE, TO AMUSE.**

WEEKLY.

PIONEER

Cigarettes.

3d.
per packet.

**RICHMOND
CAVENDISH & CO. LTD.
LIVERPOOL.**

No. 579.]

TRANSMISSION AT
DAYS HEREIN.

WEEK ENDING AUGUST 22, 1901.

ENTERED AT
STATIONERS' HALL.

[PRICE ONE PENNY.]

"THE SALT OF SALTS"

Abbey's

**Effer-
vescent Salt**

Abbey's Salt is a pleasant, cooling, invigorating effervescent tonic drink. Its most valuable feature is its gentle aperient quality. It aids digestion; helps the intestines to do their work; purifies the blood and clears the complexion. It prevents disease by keeping the entire system in perfect condition. It banishes diseases already developed by restoring the affected organs of the body to their normal state. It is so pleasant to take that children delight in it. Not the slightest unpleasant or reactionary after-effect ever attends its use. As a remedy

For Dyspepsia,

Constipation, Headache,

Biliousness, Heartburn,

Flatulence, Kidney and

Liver Complaints,

Abbey's Salt is the best in the whole world. When water is added to Abbey's Salt the fruit acids it contains combine with the other ingredients of the formula and generate carbonic acid gas (a valuable and harmless sedative, agreeable to the most sensitive stomach). This produces a double salt, which is held in solution and drunk during effervescence. To this double salt is due the valuable aperient properties of "Abbey's."

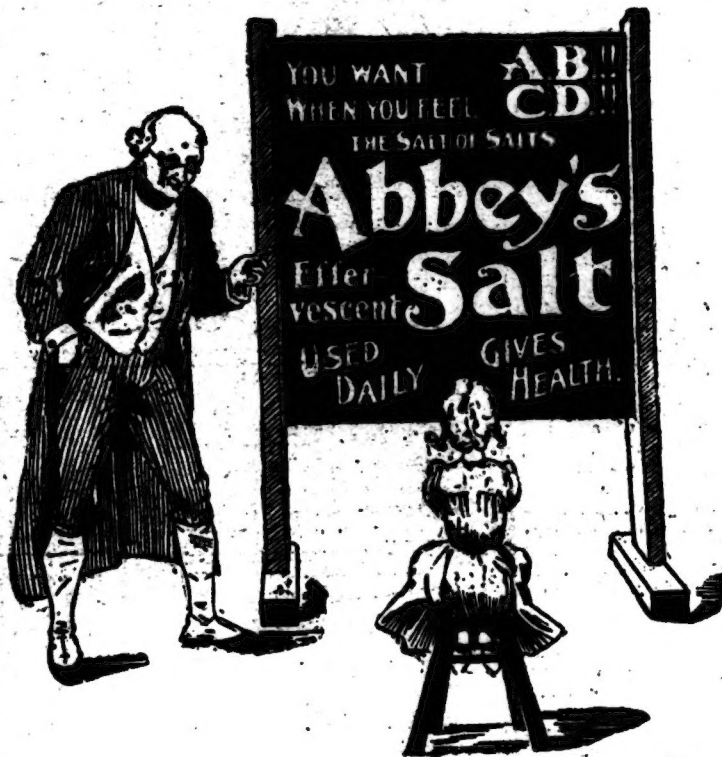
Abbey's effervesces slowly and evenly, and continues to do so until all is drunk. The ordinary effervescent preparation effervesces all at once, blinding and choking the user, and leaving the drink flat before finished. "Abbey's" contains no bromides or other injurious ingredient.

"THE SALT OF SALTS"

Abbey's

**Effer-
vescent Salt**

If you feel "seedy" or "out of sorts," a teaspoonful of Abbey's Effervescent Salt in a half-tumbler of water will put you right at once.



It will cost you nothing to learn that Abbey's Effervescent Salt is just what you require. Send us your name and address on a post-card and mention this paper, and we will send you a Sample Bottle free and post paid.

Address: The Abbey Effervescent Salt Co. Limited,
144 Queen Victoria Street, E.C. (Laboratories at Hounslow.)

Abbey's Salt is sold by all Chemists at 2s. 6d. per Bottle.

That Troublesome Thirst.

Thirst is constant during these warm days. It seems impossible to quench it.

Ordinary drinks seem to aggravate rather than satisfy it, and too much liquid is bad for the stomach and general health.

Abbey's Effervescent Salt makes a cooling, refreshing, healthful beverage. Take a teaspoonful in a tumbler of water two or three times a day and you will not be worried by thirst or heat. It is the most healthful and palatable beverage you can use during warm weather.

It makes nutrition perfect, assimilation complete, keeps the blood pure, and thus does foundation work by assisting in the building of new tissue. Its daily use by jaded and worn-out humanity means new blood, new tissue, new nerve force, new life.

Abbey's Effervescent Salt is intelligently and conscientiously made to meet the requirements of modern civilisation. It is honestly made, honestly advertised, and honestly worth the moderate price for which it is sold.

Nearly everyone requires a regulator of the system. Don't use drastic drugs which may do you harm. Avoid inferior, harmful, and unpalatable salines. Take your medicine pleasantly.

"The LANCET" says:

"Abbey's Effervescent Salt is quite free from objectionable ingredients. It is agreeable in character, and of approved composition. It is also quite free from the contaminations sometimes found in effervescent powders."

You can begin "Fettered Lives" this moment by turning to Page 105.

PEARSON'S

TO INTEREST TO ELEVATE, TO AMUSE. WEEKLY.

"PEARSON'S WEEKLY" INSURANCE COUPON.

The signing of this coupon by the purchaser will be sufficient to entitle his or her next-of-kin or legal representative to the benefits of the £25,000 Railway Insurance, and the £100 Cycling Insurance, provided the conditions of the insurance coupon have been fulfilled.

Signature
Available from 5 p.m., Thursday, Aug. 16th, 1901, until midnight, Friday, Aug. 23rd, 1901. For full particulars see page 112.

No. 579.]

TRANSMISSION AT
BORN BATES.

WEEK ENDING AUGUST 22, 1901

ENTERED AT
STATIONERS' HALL.

[ONE PENNY.]

NO WALL WANTED.

At a recent meeting of a local government board, a proposal to erect a new churchyard wall came under consideration. After a long and heated argument an old member rose and said:

"If you are all done now perhaps I may be able to get a word in. In my opinion we don't need a new wall round the churchyard. I don't know of anyone who wants to get in, and nobody that is in has ever tried to get out."

This was thought to be a convincing argument, so it was carried unanimously that the old wall be left standing.

MAMMA (examining the proof of her small daughters' photograph): "Grace, why didn't you smile?"
Grace (aged six years, with an injured air): "I did, mamma, but the man didn't put it down."

"YOUR husband is not looking well to-night, Mrs. Rhymmer."

"He isn't, and I'm not surprised at it."

"No? Has he been overworking himself?"

"It isn't that so much; it's his originality. Why, that man is struck by so many original ideas that his mind must be one mass of bruises."

NOT THE SLIGHTEST DANGER.

DURING the small-pox scare in Hull, people would scarcely engage a cab. An old lady from the country, who had become tired, thought she would like to take a cab, but she was afraid, as someone had told her that cabs were frequently used to convey small-pox patients to the hospitals.

She went to one of the ranks and asked the first driver if he thought there was any risk of her taking the disease if she hired his vehicle.

"Oh, no, mum, not a bit," answered the caddy, "with me you're safe, for we're all vaccinated, all on us—my horse, the wheels of my cab, and myself."

The old lady was thoroughly reassured and stepped in. The Jehu drove her off, obsequiously to himself.

BUTLER: "There's a man below to see you, sir."

Mayberry: "What did you tell him?"

Butler: "I told him you told me, if it was a lady to say you were in, and if it was a man to say you were out."

Mayberry: "What did he say then?"

Butler: "He said I was to tell you he was a lady."

ROWELL: "There goes Withers on horseback. He is a living illustration of the saying, 'A merciful man is merciful to his beast.'"

Snaffle: "In what way?"

Rowell: "Don't you see? He lets his weight rest on the horse only once in a while; the most of the time he is in the air, going up or coming down."

THE TUNNEL WAS FORGOTTEN.

At Brussels the visitor is often struck by the extreme thinness of the earth covering the Braine le Comte tunnel, and wonders why the common sense of the engineers who made the line did not direct them to continue the cutting, and thus avoid a subterranean passage.

The mystery is thus explained: When railways were in their veriest infancy, the Belgian Government sent a party of engineers over to England to acquire experience in construction of the new iron highways, and on their return they were instructed to lay out the first railway in that enterprising little kingdom. The work was accordingly put in hand, but on its completion one of the engineers exclaimed:

"Good gracious, we have forgotten the tunnel!"

The consternation was general, especially when it was remembered that there was not a single line in England but could boast of a tunnel. What was to be done? Nothing but to construct the long corridor at Braine le Comte, and when it was finished the earth was put on the top. The tunnel was the glory of the line.

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SEASIDE TUESDAY.

When you're basking in the sunshine
By the rippling azure sea,
With the city left behind you,
From its toll and trammels free;
While of fresh and fragrant breezes
You contented breathe your fill,
Don't forget the little people
In the crowded city still.

What is Ninespence?—one excursion,
Or some cigarettes the less;
But the joy that it can purchase
You can never, never guess!
All the gladness that dwells in it,
All the good that it can do,
You would never, never grudge it
Or regret it if you knew!

In the courts, and lanes, and alleys
There is many a little child
Who has never seen a meadow,
Or a blossom growing wild;
Who has never known the meaning
Of the glad word "holidays,"
And whose little world is bounded
By the streets wherein he plays.

Think of these on Seaside Tuesday,
These whose lot is sad and grey,
Help to bring God's song and sunlight
Into their lives for a day!
Be it much or be it little,
This your heart's reward shall be:
"What ye give unto My children,
Ye are giving unto Me!"

On August 20th every reader who has ever been to the seaside, who is at the seaside, or is going to the seaside, should make himself or herself responsible for a small donation for the Fresh Air Fund. This day will be known as "Seaside Tuesday," and all subscriptions should be sent to the Secretary, Fresh Air Fund, Henrietta Street, London, W.C., in envelopes marked "Tuesday."

REALLY GREAT SKILL.

"I TELL you," exclaimed a young medical student, "our professor's a great surgeon."
"How's that?" asked his chum.
"Well, a fellow was brought in with a crushed leg. The professor said it must come off. So he hacked away and cut off the wrong leg."
"Do you call that great surgery?"
"Wait a bit. The professor said it would be terrible for the poor fellow to go about with no legs at all, so he splintered up the crushed leg instead of cutting off that too, and now it is as good as ever. An ordinary surgeon would have left the fellow legless. Wonderful skill, the professor's."

MEN WITH BIG HEADS.

PROFESSIONAL men and men of science and letters have, as a rule, larger heads than tradesmen, the size of a man's head being usually in proportion to his intellectual capacity. Such is the conclusion arrived at by M. le Bon, who made extensive inquiries and research into this question, and his opinion was similar to the conclusion arrived at by Dr. Garson, who found that of 100 modern Parisian skulls twenty-eight had a capacity of more than 1,600 cubic centimetres; while of 100 negroes' skulls, only nine exceeded this capacity.

Mr. Christy, the well-known hat manufacturer, states that the average size of a hat for English adult males is 7, or 22in. in circumference. Germans have round heads, Malays have small, Portuguese average 6½—7, Spaniards slightly larger. Japanese exceed the English average; men who have to do with horses—coachmen, jockeys, livery servants—have undoubtedly the smallest heads.

York has the largest range of size in England, Cambridge next, then Oxford.

UNCALLED-FOR REMARKS.

A BIRMINGHAM man wrote to the editor of a horticultural paper asking what plants would be suitable additions to dried grasses for winter ornaments.

The editor replied:

"*Acrocalium roseum*, *A. album*, *Gomphrena globosa*, and *G. globosa carnea*."

When the man read this he fairly lolled over with rage, and immediately sent a note ordering his paper to be discontinued. He said that an editor who swore in that way just because he was asked a simple question should have no support from him.

MRS. MANYKIDS: "There is one thing about our girls—they are always self-possessed."

PAPA Manykids (grimly): "Yes; they're too self-possessed. I wish they'd get someone else to possess them."

A SMART BOY.

THERE is a good story going the rounds about a man who has become a successful merchant. A few years ago he was employed as an office boy and messenger for a large firm. He was sent to collect an account from a firm which was considered very "shaky," and was told to get the money at all hazards. The debtors gave him a cheque for £50. He went to the bank at once to cash it, and was told by the cashier that there were not enough funds to meet it.

"How much short?" asked the lad.

"Thirty shillings," was the answer.

It lacked but a minute or two of the time for the bank to close. The boy felt in his pockets, took out thirty shillings, and, pushing it through the window, said, "Put that to the credit of Blank and Co."

The cashier did so, whereupon the boy presented the cheque and got the money. Blank and Co. failed the next day, and their chagrin can be better imagined than described when they found out the trick that had been played upon them.

MOTHER (to small boy going into the country): "Frank, have you taken everything you will need?"

Frank: "Yes, ma."

Mother: "Have you your tooth-brush?"

Frank (indignantly): "Tooth-brush! Why, I thought I was going away for a holiday!"

A CONSULTATION WHILST BATHING.

A CERTAIN physician in a large watering-place on the south coast had acquired an unenviable reputation for making his bills as large as possible without much regard to the state of his patient's purses.

There were people who, furthermore, said that it really seemed as if there were "visits" on his bills which had never had existence anywhere else.

But he was a skilful physician, and his tendency to overrate his services only served to amuse some of his patients who had plenty of money and were not especially sharp in looking after it.

"Why," said one man to another, speaking of the doctor, "he brought my daughter Jennie up from her attack of pneumonia when two other physicians said that there was no hope for her, but when she was quite well again he charged me for three calls he made to inquire in a friendly way how she was getting on."

"That seems a little forced," admitted the other man, "but it's nothing compared to an experience I had with him some little time ago."

"We happened to be bathing at the same time one day, and I swam up to him and inquired how his wife was."

"She is very well," said the doctor.

"And your daughters?" I asked.

"They're perfectly well, both of them," replied he, rather shortly, I thought.

"So I said:

"I'm delighted to hear it; remember me to them," and swam away.

"And what do you think I received from him a week or two later? My half-yearly account, the last item of which on the bill was—

"To consultation at sea, one guinea!"

Although no one has ever seen that bill the story clings to the doctor's name to this day.

SHORT STORIES in Pearson's Great Fiction Paper. 1d. every Tuesday.

SHORT STORY

THE STORY OF A BRILLIANT IDEA.

.. By Gertrude Page. ..

THE Misses Walton, aged respectively nineteen and twenty-one, were very great on brilliant ideas, and they had an average of about two every three months. Generally speaking, however, half of them were utterly impracticable, and the other half they did to death.

Nevertheless, they went on, nothing daunted, always positively convinced that the last far surpassed all the rest.

But perhaps the most brilliant of all was concerning a little furnished cottage of their father's down by the river. At one time he used to let it, but he had given up bothering about it recently, allowing it to remain untenanted. Ethel thought of the idea first, but Ida very much enlarged upon it, so they agreed to consider it a joint discovery. The notion was this:

Ethel said: "Why not persuade father to let us have the letting of the cottage and give us a share of the proceeds?"

Ida said: "Why not rent the cottage from father, and after paying him, take all the proceeds over for ourselves?"

After that they went about looking very preoccupied for two whole days, and were constantly seen holding eager, excited converse together, the result of all which, was a visit to the library.

Mr. Walton, who was a most indulgent parent, listened attentively to the latest thing in brilliant ideas, and promised to consider their request. He said he was afraid the cottage would need a good many repairs to make it habitable; it would certainly need to be thoroughly overhauled before anyone took it.

The girls pressed their point however, and he finally agreed to let them have it for five pounds a year, and make what they could.

He did not for a moment suppose they would really let it, but he saw no harm in allowing them to try. He had had a long experience of these sudden fancies of theirs, and knew how soon they died out.

When the girls arrived to inspect their property, they found it rather dilapidated, but decided to let it go until they had made some money over it. Dazzling sums, that would pay for innumerable matinees and hansom, to say nothing of new bicycles, already danced before their eyes, and they set to work with a will to tidy up the piece of garden and stick some pictures on the walls.

"It has only stood empty for want of advertising," said Ida, "we'll send two advertisements out to-night."

"And we'll ask twenty-five shillings a week," remarked Ethel, "that will be about ninety pounds a year, won't it?"

Ethel was always weak in arithmetic.

"Nonsense," replied her sister, "why there are only fifty-two weeks in the year."

"Well anyhow it isn't far out, and if we get fifty pounds that's about twenty each, isn't it?"

Worded the advertisements was the cause of a little discussion, but they were eventually concluded and posted.

Three days later they received the following missive:

"Mr. Hayward would be glad to receive particulars concerning cottage advertised near the river. Number of rooms, rent, etc."

That was a busy morning for the girls. Such writing and re-writing, and tearing up, and falling out, as never was; but at last an epistle, some three sheets in length containing a description of the whole neighbourhood, was dispatched to the said Mr. Hayward.

Two days afterwards, a second letter arrived, notifying that Mr. Hayward would take the cottage for a month, and visions of small fortunes delighted the eyes of the Misses Walton.

They went up to town on the strength of their improved prospects and spent a gay morning, returning in good time because the new tenant was to take possession that evening.

Two ladies and two young men were in the same carriage with them, but the girls were in such high spirits, they paid no heed whatever to their companions, chattering to each other the whole way, and barely noticing when the two ladies alighted at the next station.

"What do you guess Mr. Hayward is like?" asked Ethel eagerly.

One of the two young men looked up curiously from his paper, but Ethel's eyes were fixed inquiringly on Ida's.

"Oh, he's pretty sure to be elderly," replied the latter, "you can guess by his writing and what he says. I expect he's a city man and hasn't much time as he says so little."

"Perhaps we ought to have asked if he had any family?"

"He's sure to have, but it doesn't matter to us so long as he pays his rent, and they can get into the cottage."

One young man kicked the other young man surreptitiously and they exchanged glances then went on studying their papers.

"It will be rather awkward if they arrive before evening," went on Ethel, "as there's a good lot to do."

"But they're not likely to; he said Thursday evening. He'll come straight from the city probably, and Mrs. Hayward and the children will follow to-morrow."

"Why do you suppose he wrote instead of her?"

"Why shouldn't he?"

"I shouldn't have thought he would have bothered."

"But, no doubt, the cottage is chiefly for himself. He's coming for the boating, I expect."

"Yes, and I don't suppose he'll bother what the cottage is like, or it mightn't be good enough."

"I hope he won't find those damp patches on the walls we didn't cover them all up with the picture, did we?"

"Not quite. There's that broken window, too."

"Yes, we must get that mended as soon as possible. But we won't bother about the roof until we've got some money."

"What's the matter with the roof?"

"Didn't you hear old Denton say it was unsafe? He said a gale might carry it right off."

A surprised rustle from one newspaper and a smothered exclamation from behind the other.

"Yes, but he's always finding fault with something. No doubt, he hoped to have it free for himself, and he's pretty angry we've got it. He said something about the drains being wrong didn't he?"

"Yes, he said they were choked up with rats but it's ridiculous nonsense."

"Of course it is. Father wouldn't have let it to us if it were true. Won't he be surprised to hear we've got a tenant already?"

"Rather. We won't tell him until he comes home. You know he said it must be overhauled before we let anyone go in, but it isn't likely we're going to refuse a good tenant. It can be overhauled afterwards."

One newspaper went down rather suddenly, and a pair of wondering eyes took in the girls' eager faces, pretty hair, bright eyes and generally charming appearance.

"Take care, don't let on," murmured the other reader, adding aloud: "Curious affair this Sierra Leone hut-tax business."

"Very curious," replied his companion drily, "seem to be a lot of curious points about a hut."

"I suppose we ought to find one or two saucepans and kettles of some kind," went on Ethel, "do you suppose cook would lend us some?"

"No I don't. I suppose we shall have to buy a kettle."

"What about the rest?"

"Oh we'll say they're not included. Saucepans and frying-pans aren't furniture."

"Did you ask Denton to mend that chair after all?"

"No I quite forgot. What a nuisance. One of the beds has a leg loose too, but I shouldn't think they'll find out."

"If they do, they'll probably mend it, and that will save us the trouble."

"I suppose they couldn't claim damages if they had a fall?" said Ethel thoughtfully.

"Of course not. If they did we should simply have to say the things were all right and claim damages ourselves. A counter-claim I think you call it. Father would see us through that all right."

Ethel turned her head casually, and, for the first time, scrutinized their fellow-passengers. She thought the dark one looked very nice.

Ida looked round, too, and afterwards they fell out as to which was the best looking. Ida preferring the other man and protesting that fair men were always nicer looking than dark.

When the train slackened speed before Mulsea, a grey mist had begun to envelope the country, and both girls looked a little anxious.

"It will be rather damp in the cottage," said Ethel.

"Yes, and I really don't know if the grate burns all right," replied Ida, "we ought to have tried it."

"I asked Denton and he said it was all right when you once got it to go, but it sometimes smoked the place out first."

"I hope it won't to-night, or Mr. Hayward might come up to the house about it," continued Ida as the train stopped.

She felt very wise for twenty-one, but she did not altogether know how she should have to treat with an angry tenant.

Two hours later the housemaid brought the girls a note as they were dressing for dinner.

"Dear Madam," it ran, "would you kindly provide a frying-pan, saucepan, kettle, fire-irons, coal-scuttle, blacking-brushes, arm-chair, sofa-cushion, door-mat, wine-glasses, egg-cups, and bath, all of which, I am sure you will understand, are necessary accessories to a furnished cottage. Also I should feel obliged if you would send a man to mend the broken window and the roof at once, and replace the broken chair. We have been struggling vainly to light a fire for an hour without success, perhaps you would explain how it is to be done."

"I regret to add, in conclusion, that I must change my plans owing to the dilapidated state of the cottage, but as it is impossible to remove for a day or two, will you kindly attend to these most reasonable requests as soon as possible."

"I am, Yours truly, P. Hayward."

"Good gracious!" remarked Ethel.

"Good gracious," echoed Ida, and the two girls gazed at each other blankly.

"What are we to do?" was the next question.

A loud ring at the door startled them.

Annie went to open it, and they waited, listening anxiously.

"Who does this precious cottage belong to?" asked an angry voice. "We must have those things at once, and how on earth can we do without a fire, a night like this?"

The whole thing is a glaring imposture, the owner ought to pay a hotel bill for us, for the night."

"It belongs to the two young ladies, sir," replied Annie snubly, "they are doing all they can, but unfortunately the master is away, so they are rather troubled to know what to do."

"I will see them, decidedly."

"Good gracious!" gasped Ethel.

"Be quiet, silly," muttered Ida.

"Will you come in?" asked Annie.

"I'm afraid we can't; we're in such a filthy mess from that beastly grate. Perhaps Miss Walton wouldn't mind coming to the door."

Miss Walton did mind, very much, but with anxious misgivings, both she and her sister appeared. The hall lamp shone down on them, lighting up their sunny hair, and the old oak furniture made a charming background to the two girlish figures.

The men outside were in darkness and had the full bene-

fit of the picture, but after the bright light within, the girls could not discern their faces at all.

"Excuse me, madam," said the same speaker gruffly, "but I think there must be some mistake about the cottage we have taken. The situation as regards boating is no doubt excellent, but we can't live on the situation. We require fire, food, and habitable sleeping apartments as well."

"We're very sorry," began Ida, trying not to appear nervous, "but the cottage is what we advertised, you ought to have come to see it."

"Oh, is it?" drily, "well you forgot to mention the roof and the drains and the smoky fireplace anyhow."

"We didn't know they were so bad," ventured Ethel, "we will have everything seen to in the morning."

"And what are we to do to-night?" the voice had grown different somehow and the girls grew braver.

"I think if you went to a hotel, our father would make it all right. He will be home to-morrow. How many of you are there?"

"Two."

"Mrs. Hayward and yourself, I presume?" Ida was growing quite important, but a smothered choke from the other black figure rather unmanned her.

"Myself and Mr. Woodward," was the emphatic reply.

"I should not dream of taking Mrs. Hayward into a cottage with a dicky roof."

The other black figure turned suddenly as if something was too much for his gravity altogether, but recovering himself quickly, he managed to say:

"Perhaps the ladies will call themselves in the morning, and allow us to point out the deficiencies. I believe it is usual for a landlord or landlady to personally superintend these matters."

The two girls consulted a moment. Finally they agreed to the request, and the new tenants departed, partially satisfied.

When the morning arrived, however, they were very loth to fulfil their promise and hung back as long as they dared.

"Supposing it is an imposture, what will happen?" asked Ethel.

Ida did not know but she finally decided that they had better go to try and smooth matters.

They knocked at the door in great trepidation, but rallied each other bravely, determined to braven the matter through.

Phil Hayward stood with his back to the chimney piece and his hands behind him. Tom Woodward leaned on the table with his back to the light, swinging one foot. Both tried to look stern and businesslike, but their eyes would laugh in spite of themselves.

Ethel and Ida gasped, "Oh" and looked from their tenants to each other, realising instantly what had happened and vaguely wondering whatever they could do next.

"Good-morning," said Hayward rather coldly.

"Good-morning," they replied nervously.

"We didn't know—" began Ida, and hesitated.

"We thought you were—old—" stammered Ethel, getting very red.

"I'm sorry to disappoint you," replied Hayward. "Do old people like shades of this kind?"

"And rats?" put in Woodward wickedly.

The girls were silent a moment.

"You ought to have told us who you were yesterday," said Ida suddenly with indignation.

"We are telling you now, silyly. Personally I think it is extremely wrong to attempt to let a cottage that you know perfectly well requires overhauling."

Both girls flushed deeply.

"My friend here has a delicate chest," continued Hayward reluctantly, carefully keeping his face from the light and avoiding Woodward's eyes, "I am terribly anxious about him, after sleeping in such a damp place."

Ida glanced up anxiously, and she could not help thinking that the friend in question looked the picture of health.

Ethel did not venture to look up, but stammered a very contrite apology.

"We told you, you could go to a hotel at father's expense," interrupted Ida bluntly.

"Well the fire came round all right, so we decided to stop here," replied Hayward.

"Are you going to-day?" she continued.

"Well—or—" began Hayward rather grandly, "we think we may as well stay now we are here, if you will kindly see to those little matters I mentioned in my letter."

The girls promised to do so, and then departed looking decidedly subdued.

The two young men, who were thoroughly enjoying themselves, watched their retreating figures as long as they were visible, and then had a good laugh.

Late that night Mr. Walton returned, and had to be told the whole story. He was a good deal concerned, and looked very grave, but he could not resist an inward smile at the humour of the situation.

As soon as possible the next day, he called upon the new tenants, and Ethel and Ida, watching anxiously from a window, were not a little surprised to see the three returning together, evidently on most friendly terms.

"Mr. Hayward and Mr. Woodward are coming to lunch with us," said their father, "while the plumber does a few repairs to the cottage. Mr. Hayward's father is an old friend of mine, or at least, was, not very long ago. I thought we would all have a turn on the river together this afternoon."

Half an hour later, the last traces of embarrassment had disappeared, and they were all laughing together over the new landlords' first venture.

It was the last, for they did not attempt a second. Indeed, there was no need, as the same tenants used the cottage more or less all the summer. The next advertisement in which the girls were concerned, was the announcement of a double wedding, in which a most amicable arrangement was duly registered and signed between the landlords and their two tenants.

And, as usual, the two girls agreed that this time they really had reached the most brilliant idea of all.



He Tries to Make the Governor as Comfortable as Possible.

P.W. the other day met a man who had just completed a term of imprisonment—his first offence. He said: "I'm a cabinet-maker really, but in general terms a handy man. I don't mean the handy man of the Navy, the Britisher's salt water pet, but I can turn my hand to anything. I have just done three months, and if everybody is treated like I was, then there's not much room for complaint. The thing that stings is the knowledge that you are a prisoner—that burns deep into your soul."

"When I was duly installed in my new quarters the governor of the gaol gave me a call. This visit was a surprise to me in more ways than one. It opened my eyes."

"He knew what I was—a cabinet-maker. He said that he wanted a side-board made for his dining-room, and that I was to start on it at once. He gave me the plans and designs for it, and these had been prepared, so I learnt afterwards, by another prisoner, who was a draughtsman. It was a pretty design and perfect in every detail. I was single-handed on the job and it took me nearly three months to finish it. There was a good deal of carving on it and this was done by a wood-carver on the premises, a luckless wight like myself. The governor was very pleased with my work and when I left the prison gave me ten shillings."

"In addition to this, I was allowed to smoke. Of course, I didn't buy the tobacco myself, but I found half an ounce outside my cell door every other day. I don't know who put it there, but I've got my suspicions."

"From what I saw it was evident that gaol governors are able to furnish their houses with the work of prisoners. Even the very clothes the governor wore were made by a tailor who was doing a short term like myself. I was working on the side-board as this tailor was working on a suit of 'best' for the governor."

"He gave the man the cloth and underwent the operation of measuring and fitting in the usual way."

"When this suit was finished, a bright idea occurred to the tailor. He made a cap out of the cuttings and then put the suit on with the intention of walking out of the prison as a visitor, or somebody else. As he was crossing the yard with that purpose in view, the governor appeared on the scene, and in response to his query as to where he (the tailor) was going, the man calmly replied that 'he was only just stretching the suit as it was a little stiff'—a queer excuse to make."

"The tailor turned back of his own accord and was followed by the governor."

"In the governor's house I saw heaps of things that had been made by His Majesty's guests. A chatty warder pointed out a pipe-rack, an elaborate thing, made by a prisoner."

"The same man had carved a magnificent frame of oak and the picture in it was that well-known one entitled 'Sympathy.' There was irony, I thought."

"But the governor was a feeling man and just, and I was not surprised to be told that the new bicycle he used to ride was made by a man who was once in his care."

"Among my fellow prisoners was an artist, a delicate sort of chap. He was doing six months 'hard,' but the hardest thing he did was painting a religious picture for the chapel."

"He also painted a picture of the governor's little girl who gave him quite a dozen sittings and as many packets of sweets."

"A man who worked with me in the shops as a joiner's labourer told me that in the governor's house in a Yorkshire gaol may be seen an organ which was entirely built by a prisoner, and that in the same house are some richly-bound books, forming part of the library, the work of another prisoner."

"Out of the hundreds of prisoners that lodge in a gaol you are bound to come across a good percentage of them who are first-class craftsmen, and some are perfect geniuses."

"A governor's house at any gaol, I was told by old gaol-birds, is a regular museum, and I guarantee to say that four-fifths of the things you see, from big and showy furniture to fancy bric-a-brac, have been made by men who have broken the law."

"Short term prisoners have not the same restrictions put on them as have the regular convicts."

"The Home-Office Authorities recognise that to forbid a man from following his trade in gaol would in itself be punishment of a severe character, because this restriction, supposing it were carried out, would produce a bad effect in the man's work afterwards."

"Hence the rule of permitting a skilled artisan to follow his trade, which at present obtain in these particular gaols. It is a good thing for the prisoners, and for the governors too; it keeps a man's hand in."

"Women prisoners also do a lot of fancy needlework and lace work for the governor's wife. In return for this they get fairly well treated."

IN ONE WAY, NO DOUBT.

"SAY, Bob, how could you have the nerve to tell that screeching Miss Bird that she's a beautiful singer?"
"Nerve, my boy. Look at her! Surely, I'm not to blame if she thought I mean her voice."

AN American doctor prescribes a mixture of eidiethyl-phosphonidimethylmethane and trichloroacetylidimethyies thenylpyrazolones for warts. Most people would prefer to keep the warts.

"PLEASE TOUCH!"

If the experiments recently tried abroad are to be regarded as conclusive, and there is every reason to suppose that they may, the tickets to be placed against the bronze statues in our museums will bear the words, "Please touch!" Those experiments show that handling preserves them.

It was observed in Berlin that those parts of bronze figures that had been surreptitiously handled by visitors were brighter and looked in a better state of preservation than the other portions. Inquiries of antiquarians and experts revealed the fact that the Greeks made a practice of polishing their bronzes by rubbing with the bare hand from time to time, and that the oil exuded from the human hand was good for the metal.

An experiment was tried with four bronzes for a certain period; one was polished with oil occasionally, another was rubbed by hand, a third was wiped with a mixture of oil and a chemical preparation, and the fourth was left untouched. The last suffered most, while the bronze polished with oil took first place, and the hand-rubbed one came second.

MAMMA: "Oh, see, Willie, your little brother can stand all alone! Aren't you glad?"

Willie: "Yes, I am. Now I can get him to stand up against the fence while I throw knives round him, can't I?"

BUILT FOR BUSINESS.

NOR long ago the proprietor of a travelling menagerie caught a small, half-starved-looking robin crawling under the waggon, with the evident intention of witnessing the show for nothing.

Seizing the culprit, the proprietor assumed his most ferocious mien and thundered:

"Do you know what I do with little boys I catch sneaking into my show without paying?"

"No, sir," was the reply.

"I feed the lions with 'em," roared the proprietor.

"Here, Pietro, chuck him into Brutus's den!"

As Pietro, the lion-tamer, approached, the youthful trespasser didn't appear to be much distressed.

"I say, guv'nor," he remarked to the proprietor, "I'd do the thing well while I was about it, if I was you. Jest look at me! Do you think there is enough on me to make a fair feed for a 'ungry lion? I reckons their ain't, an' I'll tell ye what, I'll do! Let me see the show fer nuthin' an' in less than an hour arter I goes out I'll have all the fattest kids in the district a-crawl'n' under them their waggon!"

This little proposal tickled the proprietor, and the youngster saw the show for nothing after all.

WHEN a fellow has discovered that all his loose change has filtered through a hole in his trousers pocket, it is nearly impossible to get him to accept the scientific proposition that nothing is ever lost.

PARCELS IN OMNIBUSES.

YOU have often been annoyed, when riding in an omnibus, by having to squeeze past some other passenger who is nursing a bundle or a big parcel, and you may even have muttered something about taking a cab or making a Pickford van of the 'bus. And it is just possible that you yourself have been put to the expense of a cab for a journey covered by a penny 'bus ride, on account of a parcel.

This raises the question: "Why is there not some place on a 'bus for the conveyance of parcels?" This need not be done free, although it may be so on a train. Passengers would, generally speaking, be glad to pay an additional fare for the convenience, and the proprietors would earn extra revenue while accommodating their customers and preventing occasional annoyance to others.

If the attempt were made, a space for such luggage could soon be provided without interfering with the carrying capacity of the vehicle for passengers; and, although, no doubt, some people would want the 'bus to take a seaside trunk a mile for a penny, the regulations concerning size and weight limits would be easily enforced and properly observed.

CAPITAL CITIES WHICH ARE IN THE WRONG PLACE.

Manchester, for instance, should be London.

CITIES are so usually born, not made, that the manufacture of a capital and seat of Government for the Commonwealth of Australia invites attention. One of three hitherto-unknown places—Orange, Yass, or Bombala—in New South Wales is to be turned into the Federal capital.

On a site of 100 square miles a model city is to be built and this will be the national centre of Australia. How many countries would change their capitals if they could start afresh with a clear field and no favour?

To start with, Manchester is the true geographical and social centre of England. It is central, which London is not. It is likewise free from fear of invasion, while a sudden dash across the ninety miles from France would strike the Empire at its heart. The position of Woolwich, too, is terribly exposed. Manchester, on the other hand, is nicely inland, yet within hail of Liverpool, while it has now its Ship Canal. It is the converging point of the arterial railways, and for a sovereign you can go to any part of the kingdom. Emphatically London should be at Manchester.

Equally ill-placed is St. Petersburg. It is at the very edge and end of Russia. As for the value of its position on the sea, the Neva is frozen up six months out of the twelve. It was a vast mistake of Peter the Great to transport his capital from Moscow to the northern morass. Moscow is central, and the building of railways has in no sense made it more open to attack. The Russian lines are of a different gauge to all others and so would be useless to an invader, while Russia would concentrate troops upon them. The Muscovite's dissatisfaction with St. Petersburg is shown by his constant glances at Constantinople, and his determination to establish his capital on the sunny Bosphorus some day.

Paris is almost an ideal capital, only the war with Germany showed its openness to attack and capture. Orleans would be better, being on a river like Paris, and rather more inland and central. It would be impossible to suggest a better capital for Germany than Berlin. Neither could Vienna be improved upon for situation.

Rome, too, is good. Its weakness is defensive. Of all European capitals it has been most often in the hands of an enemy. In its long history Rome has been besieged and captured over thirty times. But for the matter of that, London and St. Petersburg are the only two capital cities of Europe that have never been occupied by a foreign foe.

When the Commonwealth of South Africa comes into being it is safe to bet that Capetown will not be the capital. It is the John o' Groats of the land. Bloemfontein or Johannesburg, both central and handy to the rest of the country, will be made the seat of Federal Government.

In fixing up the United States, the wise Americans located the head of the republic inland, and established Washington. There is a great deal to be said for having the capital away from the enthusiasms and wild fancies of the mob of big cities. In France, for instance, Paris is so clamorous in a crisis that the Government falls before the sober and solid rest of the country can get a word in.

Of course, the American fathers could not see the marvellous future expansion of the infant state. But no one can deny that Chicago is ideally situated for the Yankee capital. It is on the chain of great lakes which a canal now connects with the Atlantic; all the railways converge there; and it is the half-way house of the continent, while Washington is on the edge. Or Kansas City would make a splendid capital.

Calcutta, again, is a painfully lopsided centre of Indian life. The Mogul Emperors arranged things better when they fixed their throne at Delhi.

The Emperor of China realised the disadvantages of a capital within touch of the sea last year. So much so that he took himself and his court to Suchan in the middle of China, whither the Allies dare not follow. It is said that the Powers contemplate requiring the removal of the Chinese Government from Peking to Nankin, the old capital, which is within easy reach of Shanghai.

A map of the world shows the awkward position of London as the centre of the British Empire. For our world-domain Alexandria or Cairo is the ideal capital. Situated between East and West, North and South; holding the key to the lock of Asia in the Suez Canal; a glorious climate; the magnificent Mediterranean before and all Africa behind down to the Cape, which is the back-door to Asia, Alexandria is the natural capital of the world.

If ever the Gulf Stream should chill or be diverted, converting Britain into an Arctic land, or our coal supply should give out, we Britons might accept the invitation that Disraeli put into the mouth of an Arab sheik, and, taking ship and our treasures, transport the whole nation bodily to establish the capital of Anglo-Saxondom at Alexandria.

If it's true that children get their growth while asleep, no wonder some babies are of such slow growth.

Questions worth answering

Half-a-crown is paid for every Question used, and Replies at the rate of two guineas a column.

REPLIES.

"MY EMPIRE."

When did the Phrase, the "British Empire," Come into Use? (5679.)

It has been used figuratively as in "the empire on which the sun never sets" for almost half a century; but as representing a concrete entity the title is much younger. It received its first impulse towards general use when the late Queen was created Empress of India in 1876, and immediately thereafter suggestions were made that Her Majesty's designation should be further added to in order to include the Colonies, as well as her Indian Empire. The Jubilee of 1887 gave the term a further popularity, but it is noticeable that Queen Victoria's messages to her people are addressed to the nation until that of 1892 referring to the death of the Duke of Clarence, which was sent forth "to my subjects in every part of my Empire." Since then the use of the phrase has become a matter of course, but its popularity may be said to have grown up within the last five years.

"A THING OF BEAUTY."

What did Keats Refer to when he Wrote "A Thing of Beauty is a Joy for Ever"? (5681.)

No less than three suggestions have been put forward as likely solutions of this question. The first is that there is a very fine statue of sleeping Endymion in the British Museum, which it is more than likely Keats had seen, as he was fond of studying the Elgin marbles and other fragments of Greek antiquity there housed. In that case not this line only, but the subject of the whole poem was thus suggested.

Others have maintained that while Keats wrote he had before him the famous image of Poetry, painted by Raphael in the Vatican frescoes, with her outstretched wings and eager glance; and that this it was which inspired him.

Still more likely is the third, viz., that the natural beauties of Hampstead, then unspoiled, and later those of Carisbrooke, in the Isle of Wight, where he finished "Endymion," were the landscapes whence the vision of beauty rose before the poet's eye. The very names the island enjoys—"The Garden of England," "The Pearl of the Channel," "A basket of flowers and fruits thrown upon the surface of the water"—testify to its beauties.

WHERE THE SOLDIER HAS THE BEST CHANCE.

In which Army has a Private the Best Chance of Rising from the Ranks? (5682.)

Probably in that of the United States, where the difficulty of social standing, which so largely debars privates from rising in most armies, is almost unknown. In America a private possessed of good character, and of fair education, may rise to a commission as a matter of course, without thereafter experiencing any differential treatment socially, on that account, either from his fellow-officers or from other people. Most of the great Generals of the United States, in fact, have risen through the ranks to the positions they occupied.

The Swiss army, on account of the small proportion of its peace footing to its war strength, offers similar facilities, for there the officers are appointed from amongst the ordinary population who would be drawn upon in the event of hostilities. The boast of the first Napoleon "that every French soldier carried the baton of a field-marshal in his knapsack," does not hold good in present day practice, the French forces being almost wholly officered through the military schools.

SHIPS WORKED BY HORSES.

Have Vessels ever been Propelled Entirely by Horse Power? (5683.)

The majority of people who read of such-and-such a steamboat being of so many horse-power may be surprised to learn that at the beginning of last century vessels both in England and America were actually driven by horse-power. It was managed something after the style of the chaff-cutters and grain-grinders to be found in country districts to-day. The vessels were broad and nearly flat bottomed—mostly ferry and canal boats—and their paddle-wheels were worked by horses tramping round the deck attached to poles, just as they do in working the modern chaff-cutting machines.

BOER WORDS THAT ARE ENGLISH.

Which Boer Word is Likely to Become the Most Assimilated with the English Language? (5683.)

"Uitlander," "slim," "kopje," "burgher," "commandeer," "drift," and "Afrikaner," are all words likely to become incorporated in future English, although the last, at least, will not probably have the meaning the Boers attached to it. It is notable, however, that almost every one of these, as well as others which the war has rendered familiar, are really revivals of words used in olden times in this country. Thus "slim," in a dictionary of Cromwell's time, is defined as "subtil or crafty," and is still used in that sense in Lincolnshire.

"Kopje" is only a variant of the old English "cop," a rounded prominent eminence, and may be found in Chaucer's description of the Miller's nose. Even "spruit"—almost assimilated already as an English word—though it sounds essentially Dutch, is common in Scotland as the term for the spout of a kettle, but at one time it meant there, as in South Africa now, a wet spot alongside a flowing stream. Burns used it somewhat in this way when writing "the sprightly knowes," though he intended the adjective to include the rushes growing in such damp hollows.

"OVER PROOF."

What is the Exact Meaning of "Above Proof" as Applied to Spirits? (5684.)

Proof spirit consists of a mixture of alcohol and water containing about 49½ per cent. of alcohol. The original proof test was by the ignition of gunpowder. The spirit was poured upon some gunpowder and ignited; if when the liquor burnt out the gunpowder was also ignited the spirit was over proof, and vice versa. By law proof spirit has at 51 deg. Fah. a density 12.13 relative to water at the same temperature. The number over proof is the quantity of water which must be added to 100 volumes of the spirit to reduce it to proof strength, or that must be abstracted if it is under proof. Thus, if a whisky is sold at twenty-five over proof, if twenty-five volumes of water were added to 100 of the spirit the result would contain about 49½ per cent. of alcohol. The degree above or below proof is usually determined by the density of the liquor measured by some form of hydrometer or alcoholometer, the form known as Sike's hydrometer being that commonly adopted.

ANIMALS THAT HELP PLANTS TO LIVE.

Which Animal is Most Useful to the Vegetable World? (5685.)

It is now a well-established fact that the great majority of flowering plants produce more numerous and vigorous seeds when cross-fertilized, i.e., when the fertilizing yellow dust (pollen) so conspicuous in white lilies, etc., is carried from one flower to another. The chief agents in this important work are flying insects, and the colours, scents, and honey of flowers are all devices to attract their attention. Many flowers, such as orchids, are so constructed that they produce no seeds at all if cross-fertilization is not effected.

Probably the insects which play the most important part in this respect are bees, though it is not possible to single out one particular kind as pre-eminent in this respect. Blue flowers are particularly attractive to these creatures, so much so that Lubbock called them "bee flowers," but other bright tints are almost equally favoured. Butterflies and moths are almost as useful to plants as bees, the former cross-fertilizing day-

flowering kinds, while moths are of especial service to those white or pale, strongly-scented blossoms which open in the evening or at night.

Plants also benefit in the keen struggle for existence by the unconscious favours bestowed upon them by animals, which distribute their seeds. Birds, in particular, devour succulent fruits, and the hard seeds escaping digestion fall here and there and germinate under favourable conditions. Hooked seeds and fruits, such as those of burdock and cleavers, get attached to the hairy coats of various quadrupeds, and thus get a chance of growing up in places widely remote from the parent plants. The humble earth-worm performs incalculable services to the plant world by draining and constantly renewing the surface-soil.

AN UNCONQUERED LAND.

Has any People Proved Itself to be Practically Unconquerable? (5686.)

Not in the strictest sense, but the Swiss have maintained their independence since its first declaration in 1307, whilst the canton of Schwytz, from which the existing confederacy takes its name, might lay claim to have remained practically unsubjected since it was peopled from Scandinavia in the first century of this era. Since 1807 the Swiss have successfully defeated Leopold II. of Austria, whom they killed at Sempach; Charles the Bold, slain at Nancy; and Charles of Savoy, whom they defeated after he had entered Geneva.

In the time of the First Napoleon Switzerland was, for a short time, nominally subject to France, but even that show of suzerainty ended in 1815. The Danes, as a nation, may be said never to have been conquered, unless, perhaps, by the Prussians in 1864, but their offshoots in Sweden and Norway have both conquered, and been conquered by, the original race. The people of the United States have never been conquered, but neither have they been put to the proof.

IDEAL TELEPHONES.

Where is the Simplest and Most Extensive Telephone System in the World? (5687.)

It would be difficult to say whether Stockholm or Buda-Pest possess the best telephone system, but it is quite certain that these two towns are the best served in the world.

Stockholm possesses an installation of about 40,000 telephones. In other words, nearly every shop and private house possesses an instrument, and the system is so extensive that conversation is not only possible, but easy, over a radius of about fifty miles round the city.

Buda-Pest, in addition to being excellently served with ordinary telephones, possesses a unique system, the Telefon Hirmondo, which practically performs the function of a newspaper. News is received at all hours of the day in the central office, and, after being edited and condensed, is repeated over the wires to some 7,000 subscribers, who can listen to it in their own sitting-rooms at stated intervals during the day. The system has proved not only a public convenience but also a great commercial success.

OUR MOST INJURED TRADE.

Which Department of British Trade has Suffered the Most from Foreign Competition during the Last Quarter of a Century? (5688.)

Two British industries have been practically ruined by foreign competition protected by bounties and tariffs. For nearly a hundred years one of our most important industries was sugar refining. The raw material came mostly from our own Colonies in the West Indies. The bounty system has killed the industry, and, thanks to the Free Trade superstition, nearly ruined the Colonies as well.

The McKinley Tariff almost destroyed the tin-plate manufacture in South Wales, and, generally, it may be said of our hardware industries, especially steel manufacture, in which a quarter of a century ago we had no serious rivals, we have dropped far behind countries which adopt the policy of protection. At the same period we were the gunmakers of the world. We have now dropped to the third position. Germany comes first for heavy guns and field-pieces, America for light, quick-firing guns, while we are second to both in each department.

QUESTIONS.

5711. Has a valley ever been formed out of a cavern?
5712. Has the Mediterranean Sea ever been frozen over in historic times?
5713. Do plants grow faster by day or by night?
5714. What forecast in the first Education Bill has been completely upset?
5715. Which of the great towns of Britain is the cheapest to live in?
5716. If the sun were to cool down, by what means could it be re-kindled?
5717. Has the English Parliament ever consisted of a single Chamber?
5718. What tribe or group of nations among the American Indians have produced the greatest number of notable men and women?
5719. Has an American Indian ever been a claimant to a throne in Europe?
5720. Is there a military band in the British Empire composed entirely of full-blooded "aborigines" and "wards of the Government"?

CONDITIONS.

We shall be glad to receive from our readers replies to any of the questions asked here. Each reply must bear the writer's name and address. We shall print the best reply to each question, and shall pay at the rate of two guineas a column for all matter printed. The same reader may send replies to any number of queries, whether his own or not. Envelopes should be marked "Replies" in the top left-hand corner, and answers to the questions in any issue of the paper must reach us by first post on the Monday of the week following that for which the paper is due. Payment will only be made for replies published. Authorities on which replies are based must be given where possible. Half-a-crown will be paid on publication for every question received which is considered worthy of insertion.

THERE is a man in Kent who is so fond of money that it is said that, after paying a man a bill, he walks home with him, so as to be near the money as long as possible.

AN elderly, blighted village maiden was heard to exclaim the other day: "I can bear adversity, I can encounter hardship, and withstand the temptations of ardent spirits, fickle fortune, and the weather; but, oh, to live, and droop, and wither, and die like a single pink, I can't endure it, and, what's more, I won't!"

LOVING WIFE: "Now that you are ruined, Henry, I will disclose my secret. For years I have been saving up, and now" (pouring a shower of silver coins into his hat) "this may tide you over."
HUSBAND: "Oh, my darling, how did you manage to do it?"

WIFE: "Easily enough. Every time you said an unkind thing to me I put a shilling into a box."

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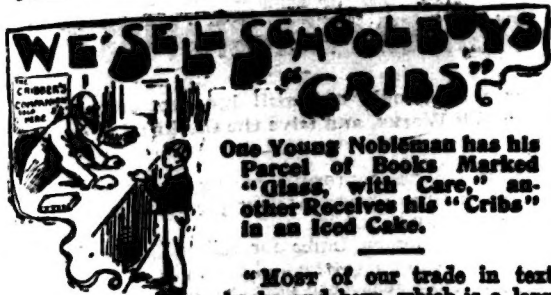
(Empowered by Special Act of Parliament.)
Capital Authorized £1,000,000 | Income, 1900 £278,492
Capital Subscribed £311,465 | Reserves Dec. 31st, 1900 £221,417
Funds, 31st Dec., 1900 (including Uncalled Capital), £1,154,900.
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SHORT STORIES is worth a shilling, but is sold at a penny.



One Young Nobleman has his Parcel of Books Marked "Glass, with Care," another Receives his "Crib" in an Iced Cake.

"Most of our trade in text-books and keys, which is a large one," said a bookseller to P.W., "is chiefly done through the post with the great public schools and colleges. Though many persons think that the days of cribbing are over, let me tell you that the demand for this class of books is remarkable."

"Royal princes, young dukes, earls, baronets, sons of well-known statesmen and others, prominent in public life, figure prominently as our customers. Though we know for what purpose they are required we cannot refuse to supply them nor question the advisability of their use. We are tradesmen, and were we to ignore them or communicate with their masters regarding their tactics they would do us an infinite amount of damage."

"Of course the greatest secrecy has to be maintained on both sides. The money always accompanies the orders, which invariably contain some such warning as 'Pack securely,' 'Do up strongly,' 'Cover well so nobody can detect books.' This is to evade the vigilant eye of the master."

"We usually pack them in a box made for the purpose covered with brown paper. In spite of these preparations we often receive some such letter as this: 'A fortnight ago I sent you an order for books with P.O.'s for same, value £2, and up to the time of writing have not received them. Please forward immediately as our Exam. takes place on the 24th of the month. Urgent.' A young lord actually wrote this particular letter. As is our custom, we had dispatched the books in question immediately on receipt of order. The fact is, that despite the unpretentiousness of the parcels, they still get intercepted and opened by the masters, and when found to contain these text books the would-be recipient is not even told of their arrival at the college. Again and again we have had to write of our fears to the expectant scholar. Sometimes our explanations are accepted, very often questioned, and now and again absolutely repudiated as incredible, and threatening letters sent."

"A young Duke got quite insolent, and persistently wrote that his books had never been sent, and that the money had been misappropriated."

"We stated our convictions in reply, every time assuring him that we had full records of the packing and dispatching of the parcels, and a copy of letter. At last we suggested that if he doubted our word, he should ask the officials if the books had been received at the college. This he declined to do, so the matter dropped for a few days. About a week later a gentleman called here and informed us that he was a detective and engaged by the Duke of Blank to compel us to dispatch his books for which he had sent the money. We showed our records to his Grace's investigator, reiterating our former convictions and he was perfectly satisfied."

"These young nobleman, however, will not be deprived of their text-books if there be any means of preventing it, for they are full of ingenious ideas. A young Prince delicately insisted that his parcel should bear the inscription, 'To be handled lightly.' 'Please mark parcel "Fragile—Glass with care,"' was the injunction of the heir to an earldom. Label books 'This side up' was the instruction of a famous statesman's son. The dictating epistle of one young man ran: 'To be kept in a dry place.' 'Perishable—To be handled with great care,' a young Earl took credit for. Directions for packing the Latin key of a youthful Duke bore the imprint of invincibility even more glaringly: 'Photographs only.' 'Not to be held by the string,' said Sir William's son. Sometimes they will have their parcels addressed to the station, labelled, 'To be kept till called for,' sometimes addressed to the parcels office, while they give addresses in the town where they deal, such as tuck shops, newsagents, fruiterers and confectioners, where they wish their books directed."

"Many of the devices adopted are smart, but none I think have quite come up to one Lord's idea. His note read: 'Kindly send me by return two keys to Homer and Virgil packed inside an iced cake. Please find money for same and books inclosed.' We did as directed, cut sufficient from the bottom of the cake to allow of the reception of the keys without touching the ice. When dispatched there was nothing at all suspicious-looking about it. We heard later that the ruse had been perfectly successful, and that he had enjoyed the cake and ice that had remained untouched."

"Generally the orders for these keys come from a particular public school with a rush. This is accounted for by the fact that all the students are told the subjects of the Examination at the same time. Often they are not informed what particular passage nor questions will be taken until the day, so in that case to be perfectly safe they send for the whole series of books. Then it is that we have to disguise the similarity of the parcels to the same college according to the varying instructions given."

AT THE TELEGRAPH-OFFICE.

Lady clerk, I would not vex
Any of your gentle sex;
Still I humbly beg to mention
That I crave your kind attention.
Half-an-hour has lapsed or more
Since I passed your office door.
See how patiently I stand,
Cash and written "form" in hand;
Will you not on me bestow
One short moment, lady? "No!"

Lady clerk, an hour has flown
Since I made my former moan.
I have watched with resignation
Your somewhat pronounced flirtation
With your friend, who, I must own, is
Rather passé for Adonis.
Take my note—you really oughtn't
To refuse, 'tis most important;
Spare one minute from your beau,
Will he not excuse you? "No!"

Lady clerk, you have, I see,
Finished your substantial tea;
I still, cold and hungry, shiver,
With this message to deliver;
Would it not, perhaps, be better,
Ere you write another letter,
If you'd kindly condescend
This my telegram to send?
'Twill not take you long, you know;
May I hand it over? "No!"

Lady clerk, 'tis very late,
Must I any longer wait?
Though it will not reach to-day,
Send it in the morning, pray!
You are busy, I perceive,
As if just about to leave,
Locking up each file and packet,
Putting on your hat and jacket.
'Time for closing!' Is it so?
Good-night, lady clerk, I go!

HUMAN FISHING NET OF THE SOUTH SEAS.

THE natives of Tutuila, one of the islands of Oceanica, have a peculiar method of catching fish. At a given signal all the inhabitants of the village assemble on the seashore, to the number of about 200 persons, each one carrying a branch of the cocoa palm. With these in their hands they plunge into the water and swim a certain distance from the shore, when they turn, forming a compact semi-circle, each one holding his palm perpendicular in the water, thus making a sort of sieve. The leader of the party then gives a signal, and the fishers all approach the shore gradually in perfect order, driving before them a multitude of fishes that are cast on the sands and killed with sticks.

The fish are then cooked over hot coals and served with bananas and cocoanut milk.

The scene is most picturesque and interesting, the effect being heightened by the appearance of the natives, who usually have their hair powdered white, the warriors in the tribe having theirs powdered red.

PAYING THE PIPER.

A young dandy walked into the bar of a country public one day, and receiving a respectful salutation from a "jokin" who stood near, ordered drinks for two, handing a sovereign in payment, saying he had nothing less.

The waitress was obliged to take the coin to her mistress for change, but soon returned and asked if he would pay the next time he was passing, as they were unable to cash it.

A minute later, taking advantage of the girl's momentary absence, the dandy nudged the labourer's arm and said:

"Look here, friend, what do you say to getting drinks for nothing?"

"Why, I see game, a-coorse."

"Well, then, I'll lend you the sovereign and you order drinks."

The exchange was soon effected, and Hodge knocked loudly on the counter.

"Same dose again," he said when the maid appeared, and, diving deep down into his trouser pocket, fished up the sovereign.

"Tak' change out o' that," he said coolly.

After another brief disappearance the young woman returned and handed over sixteen shillings change.

"There's sixpence for the drinks," she said, "and three-and-sixpence what missis has chalked up against you."

The sequel may be imagined.

ROYALTIES WHO POSSESS MAGIC JEWELS.

Trinkets they Wouldn't Part with for Worlds.

KINGS and QUEENS are evidently as great believers in talismans as are the humblest of their subjects. Indeed, perhaps more so, for in Europe, at any rate, nearly every crowned head, without exception, possesses some precious ornament or another to which he or she attributes a more or less supernatural power.

Nicholas I. of Russia is a case in point. Up to the day of his death he wore a ring which, according to the legend attached to it by tradition, assured happiness and a definite prosperity to its owner for the time being. It came to the Tsar as a betrothal present from Princess Charlotte of Prussia, the daughter of Frederick William III.

Madame Wildermuth, the latter's Swiss governess, was its first known possessor; till, one day, when rummaging with the princess, among her collection of curios, the ring was especially noticed and admired.

"This must be a very antique piece," observed the princess, putting it on her finger, "it has such a peculiar shape, that it reminds one of some ancient talisman." Endeavouring, by-and-by, to draw off the ring, with a view to its return, she found herself unable to move it. Madame Wildermuth then offered it as a keepsake to her royal pupil, who accepted it.

Later on, the princess succeeded in getting it off. It was a curious little ring, very simple, and made in Gothic fashion. Closer examination revealed, engraved within it, words which, though very much worn, when carefully deciphered, read: "Russia's Tsarina." Madame Wildermuth and her charge were highly amused with this discovery, laughingly attributing a not unnatural significance to the inscription.

In the course of years a marriage was arranged between the Princess Charlotte and the Archduke Nicholas, who, at that time was not in the near succession; his brother Alexander I., the reigning Tsar, having as his heir-apparent the Archduke Constantine, his second brother.

It was at a Court dinner in Berlin, where Nicholas had come in order to meet his prospective bride, that the ring for the second time changed hands. Briefly, the Archduke fell really and desperately in love with the princess, told her so, as they sat side by side at table, and craved some little token as a sign that his love was returned.

"Give me that tiny ring?" he urged, in a whisper, pointing to it.

"But not here! before everybody?" said Charlotte.

"No one will notice it; bury it in a piece of bread, drop the latter on the table, and I will manage to take it unnoticed."

The manoeuvre was successfully accomplished, Nicholas securing the ring—the same the princess had received from her governess years before.

Most people know of the happy wedded life of these two, but fewer, perhaps, the prophetic connection between the crowning, after eight years, of Charlotte as Russia's Tsarina, and the words engraved within the ring. Nicholas, it is said, never, until in later years it became too small for him, removed the ring from his finger.

Ultimately, he had it attached to a gold chain, and wore it continually round his neck.

The Empress Eugenie at one time possessed a certain breast-pin, shaped like a clover leaf, and formed of closely-set diamonds and emeralds, which she regarded in the light of a lucky jewel, or talisman. Nothing would persuade her but that the little ornament had a direct influence upon her happiness, so she wore it continually. She had won it at a Court raffle arranged by Napoleon III., and when her husband died, she forthwith put it away out of sight, never once wearing it during all her mourning years.

The Prince Imperial, however, went to Zululand, and his departure for the seat of war was the signal for her to don it again. When news came of her son's untimely death she took it off once more—and for ever. Eventually she gave it to the Princess Mondy, the daughter of Murat, ex-titular King of Naples.

The Rajah of Mattau, in Borneo, is the happy possessor of the largest known diamond in the world. As a royal ornament the jewel is 120 years old. It is pear-shaped, and has a small hole drilled through it.

Were this all, however, about it, there would be nothing particular to chronicle. It is the romance attached to it; the legendary properties attributed to it, which give it a foremost claim to be included in the somewhat limited list of royal precious talismans.

Many battles have at various times been fought for its possession; but in spite of every known dodge on the political board, it still remains in the Rajah of Mattau's family, a prized heirloom, and venerated mystery stone.

The Dutch Governor of Batavia for the time being, once offered the sum of £30,000 for it, with, in addition, two men-of-war, fully equipped with guns and ammunition.

It is said that the Rajah's refusal to part with the diamond on any terms was couched in language more forcible than polite. It being in Malay, the Governor, fortunately for everybody, did not get the full benefit of it. The Rajah's final word on the subject was that he regarded it as a talisman, upon the possession of which both his and his family's happiness and success depended.

THE STRONGEST TRUST IN THE WORLD

On the Isle of Purbeck only Sons can Follow their Fathers in Stone-quarrying. This article will amaze you.

How many people in England have ever dreamed that for possibly nine centuries we have had in one corner of our little country the oldest and strongest trust in the world? A trust stronger even than Mr. Peirpont Morgan's "Billion Dollar Trust," because there can never be any strikes.

How many people have ever dreamed that for this time we have also had the oldest and strongest trades union in the world? And that for the simple reason that this trust and trades union forms a single combination—it is, and during all these centuries has been, the safest and most carefully guarded monopoly in the world.

Very few people will ever have heard of it, and yet this combined trust and trades union, known as the "Ancient Guild of Purbeck Marblers," and situated in the little corner on the south coast of Dorset, known as the Isle of Purbeck, comes nearer to realising the tenets of the Socialism we hear preached so much to-day than anything else that ever has, or does exist.

HOW THE GUILD STARTED.

Just how it came into existence is clouded in the mystery of time and lost records, but there are many legends as to the origin of the Guild, all more or less highly coloured. The most probable is that it was first granted its charter by Edward the Confessor, or Harold the second, prior to the coming of William the Conqueror, for repulsing the Danes, who several times tried to invade England along their shores. The earliest record extant, however, is the ratification of this charter by Edward the Sixth, in 1551.

The peculiar rights this charter grants the Isle of Purbeck quarrymen, or "Marblers," as the ancient parchments call them, are: that, for services rendered, all the stone or marble to be found in the Isle of Purbeck is theirs and their descendants' rightful heritage; that none but members of their Guild may take stone from the Isle of Purbeck; and that none may join this Guild but the original quarrymen and their descendants in perpetuity.

This is only roughly stated, as the parchment charters are most jealously guarded, and may not be seen by profane eyes, that is, by anyone not belonging to the Guild; but it is sufficient to show that the Isle of Purbeck quarrymen of to-day are, and must be, the direct descendants of the men who first took the rock from the hillsides in their section of the country before the dawn of the Norman Conquest. And as some of the present-day quarrymen have family records going as far back as that time, they can trace their lineage further than some of the bluest blooded of Great Britain's aristocracy.

THE WAY IT WORKS.

Though again ratified in the reigns of Elizabeth and Charles the First, the charter has never received the Royal signature since the time of James the Second; yet by virtue of its never having been annulled, it holds as good to-day as when it first came into operation.

The way the Guild works to-day (the same as it has worked from the beginning), is as follows:

At the age of fourteen a quarryman's son or sons begin to serve their apprenticeship, either under their father, or some other quarryman until they are twenty-one, for not until they have obtained their majority can they become Freemen of the Guild. Then they must buy their freedom, for which, by ancient custom, a meeting is held every Shrove Tuesday at the Town Hall, Corfe Castle, and the price they have to pay for their freedom is six shillings and eightpence, a quart of beer, and a penny loaf.

Having once obtained this freedom, the Freeman can begin on his own, and he is privileged thenceforward to take stone or marble from anywhere beneath the soil in the Isle of Purbeck, so long as he pays for what he takes the nominal royalty originally assessed. It does not matter upon whose estate he works; he can even begin to undermine, if he so chooses, any of the towns in the Isle of Purbeck, and he cannot be stopped. For until the original charter, or its ratifications, is annulled or revoked, he has the right of law on his side. That this is so has been proved on several occasions.

Of course, for the general convenience of the community, no such extreme measure as the last is ever taken, but in some instances the guild and town councils have come into conflict, and, on the quarrymen asserting their privilege, the councils have had to give way. As, for instance, in the town of Swanage, some little time ago, for convenience, some of the quarrymen began to "work" their stone—that is, to chisel it to the proportions required—on the foreshore within the town. Objections were raised, but the quarrymen carried their point, and are working there to-day as unconcerned as men can when they know they have the strongest granted monopoly in the world at their back.

Nor when these monopolists wish to open a quarry on anyone's estate do they have to, or ever think to, ask permission. They just set to work.

Landowners, naturally, do not always relish this, as the undermining, of course, unites the land for building purposes. But they have no redress. An attempt to find out whether this was so was made some years ago. The owner of the land sent notices to all the quarrymen taking stone from his estate to quit by such and such a time. But the quarrymen simply paid no heed to them. Off went the landowner to London, took counsel, and spent a couple of hundred pounds in having old records searched. But when he at last returned home, he said no more about it. And the quarrymen are still there.

Every year the agents of the landowners make their rounds among the men, taking stone from their estates, and collect their royalties according to the quarrymen's books. How light this royalty is may be seen from the following figures. They have to pay:

- 1s. for every 100 feet of paving-stone.
- 2s. for every 100 feet of step-stone, and,
- 4d. for every ton of herbing.

In order to transport their stone, the quarrymen are also allowed to make roads through any estate to the main turnpike.

NO STRANGERS ALLOWED.

Another thing, the Guild had to fight against about twenty or thirty years ago. Then it was attempted to bring strangers to work in the quarries. The effort succeeded for a time; but only a short time. Ancient rights and privileges were asserted, and the strangers had to go. It is the right of only quarrymen's sons to work in the quarries, and this must remain so until it is legislated by Parliament otherwise.

The Guild has several quaint old customs they still conform to annually. When a Freeman marries he must also buy his wife's freedom. This costs them each a shilling, except the last one married in the East of the Isle, and the last one married in the West each year. These two have to furnish footfalls that cost a similar amount. The local shoemakers make these out of old leather and leather fillings, and they are generally, as the head Warden of the Guild told P.W., "as hard as rocks."

One of these is kicked about by the men who have just finished their apprenticeship, in the field adjoining the Town Hall in Corfe Castle, and the other, with a pound of pepper, is sent to what is known as the Ower Road to confirm their right of way over it. These are given to a tenant living by the road, who, in return, is supposed, and does supply the messenger with his dinner.

There are only two copies of the ratified charters of this novel Guild known to be in existence. One of these is kept by the Warden of the Guild; and since they were issued have never been seen by any but members; and the other is stowed somewhere away in one of the musty old offices in London where ancient charters are kept.

The Isle of Portland used also to enjoy the same rights as the Isle of Purbeck; but they sold their charter in the last reign to the Government so that Portland Prison might be built. But even in Portland none but the working descendants of the original quarrymen may take stone from the hills, though the prisoners are allowed to "work" it.

THAT GULP OF SEA-WATER!

THE bather who, on inadvertently swallowing a mouthful of sea-water, rushes off at the earliest moment for a glass of whisky "to take the taste out," does wrong. That was the assertion of a medical gentleman with whom P.W. recently had a chat.

Whisky counteracts the action of the salt water; lemonade will take the taste out, and leave the sea-water to do its work. And that work will result in great benefit to health. Sea-water is full of tonics and sedative properties, and won't hurt anyone.

It is a wonderful tonic for the stomach, liver and kidneys; in many cases it will cure biliousness where all other remedies have failed. You will find it very effective in all cases of disordered stomach, in insomnia and indigestion—even in dyspepsia it will do good.

It is not palatable, but neither is quinine or various other medicines that one feels compelled to take at times. You do not see old sailors suffering from biliousness! Sailors know the curative properties of sea water and they make use of it.

Come, Tell us that Story!

THE Editor is in want of really good original anecdotes, and is willing to give contributors fair return for contributing them. By original we do not mean simply reading an anecdote, and then writing it out in a different manner, and still retaining the same idea; the story must be original in every detail.

Each week the best dozen or so will be published, and the sender of each will receive a prize in the shape of a stereoscope or pencil-case, whichever may be chosen. Competitors are requested to state on their attempts the prize they would prefer. In addition to this, the sender of the best story published during August will receive a cheque for £25.

All stories must arrive on postcards addressed to the "Little Story Editor," Pearson's Weekly, 17 and 18 Henrietta Street, Strand, London, W.C.

TICKLED TELEGRAPHISTS.

Scores of People are still ignorant of how the Telegraph Works, and Give the Clerks a Lot of Fun.

MUCH ignorance prevails among certain classes of the community respecting telegraphy and the uses it is thought it may be put to.

"It is a common thing for sailors," said a clerk to P.W., "to write a message and then, placing some gold coins on it, ask that both may be sent along the wires. They look surprised when we say that we'll take the message and the fee for it, but that we cannot send the coins in the same way. Of course, we help them out of the difficulty by suggesting what they can do with the money."

"A young lady of eighteen asked me the other day what it would cost to telegraph her to a certain town in the North that she had received a wire telling her to come at once."

"Charming 'innocence' like that could not go away unrequited, so I walked round the counter, and, asking the lady to follow me, stepped across the roadway. I pointed up at the posts and wires on the roof of the office and said: 'Climb up there and slide along one of those wires till you reach your destination.' She evidently realised the foolishness of her question, and went off smiling."

"Of course we have a good many would-be Mark Twains come up to the counter with their jokes. Only yesterday a well-dressed man, not looking a bit like a humourist, came up to me and said in a deep and solemn voice:

"I want you to send off some currants for me," at which I stared.

"Ah," he went on to say, "I don't mean what you mean—I mean electrical currents," and then he laughed at his own joke.

"It is the people who have never yet sent off their first telegram who supply the best materials for fun. They know that telegraphy is something that's rapid, and being connected with the post-office take it for granted that the dispatching of a wire is not far removed from that observed in sending off a letter—with this difference, that one is quicker than the other."

"A veritable Mrs. Partington trotted into the office one day this week, all out of breath, and perspiring and red-faced. Putting a door-key on the counter, she smiled sweetly and said, 'Will you please, sir, send my old man this 'ere key by electricity? I brought it out with me this morning all or a mistake, and unless 'e gets it by twelve o'clock 'e'll get no dinner.'

"It was then I explained matters to her, at which she opened her eyes."

"Ye can't send it off by electricity—ah, well, John will 'ave to get in the best way 'e can, but I don't know 'ow 'e's goin' to do it—good mornin' an' thank ye."

"Ladies are very confiding. Realising that a clerk or telegraphist reads the most sacred of messages, and is thereby trained in secrets, they see no harm in detailing to a clerk, in confidence, all the business in relation to the wire they have just handed in for transmission. And very often after the message has been sent off they have asked: 'What would you have said in the telegram?'

"Everybody's calligraphy is not easy to read. I have asked people to read the message for my benefit, and more than once the answer has come: 'Send it off as it is; they'll understand at the other end, if you don't.'

"Birth announcements always bring some fun, for the wording is usually humorous. I remember once a young lady dashing into the office and throwing an envelope on to the counter, and rushing out again quickly. Inside the letter was a wire and the fee: the former ran: 'Twins! You lucky dog.' But the lucky dog did not hear of his good fortune, for there was no address on the message."

THERE is romance in figures. A young man met a girl, ler, married her, and took her on a wedding 2er.

KISSING the baby may result in deforming its nose or bringing on near-sightedness. The safest plan is not to kiss a baby of the feminine persuasion until it attains the age of eighteen years. The cartilage of the nose is much stronger then.

YOUNG MAN (applying for a situation): "I have had considerable experience as a commercial traveller, sir. Would you like to engage me to push your goods?"
Manufacturer: "Your services will hardly be required. There are already about a million men engaged in pushing our goods in this country. We manufacture baby carriages."

RIGGS: "My wife had a queer accident befall her the other week. As she was walking along the street a man's hat blew off and struck her in the eye. It cost me a guinea for a doctor's bill."

BRIGGS: "Oh, that's nothing. My wife was walking along the street the other day, and as she passed a milliner's a bonnet in the window struck her eye, and it cost me two pounds ten."



WERE Bill Sykes and Co. to reform, there would be no necessity for maintaining our present costly police force any longer. A few steady, reliable men would be necessary to regulate the traffic and ring the bells of early risers, but if Bill Sykes and his mates relinquished their calling, Robert would also have to relinquish his. This means that we should have to keep them all till they had procured other employment.

The provincial police of the country number 26,617, the Metropolitan 15,880, exclusive of the City police, 1,101 strong. Altogether a total of 43,598.

These worthy, honest fellows require annually no less a sum than £4,697,803 1s. 9d. to keep them going. We do not grudge a penny of this sum, because we know that they not only do their work excellently, but that the cost would, in the end, be infinitely greater were we, for the sake of economy, to insist on the cost being reduced.

But 43,598 policemen out of work through no fault of their own would have claims on us which we should find it difficult to evade. We should not say, "You must try and get work," because they would be certain to reply, "Suppose you get it for us." If we acknowledged the justice of this, and tried to provide everyone of these 43,000 stalwarts with employment, we should have our work cut out. For a time we should be buoyed up with the hope that the Army and Navy would absorb the greater part of them, but there is good reason to believe that policemen, as a rule, care as little for one as they do for the other. This discovery would be quickly followed by another. The disbandment of the police would prove a thorny problem, because very few of them understand any trade. They became policemen because, lacking the qualities which make the good mechanic, they had found exercise for their great watchfulness and courage by joining the police force.

To properly estimate the calamity which would befall the nation, were we all to suddenly turn over new leaves and never live wickedly any more, let us consider a few statistics dealing with the criminal classes.

During last year no fewer than 169,367 persons were sentenced to various terms of imprisonment, serving their time in one of the five convict or fifty-six local prisons—a decided improvement on the previous year when the offenders numbered 173,999. Bringing the case of evil-disposed persons down to to-day we find that the daily population of all our prisons averages 14,494.

It speaks volumes for the organising ability of our race that we should be able to look thoroughly well after the dangerous army with so small a number of warders as 969 male and 415 female; but would the organising power, which would be severely tried in the effort to absorb the police, be able to deal with the warders as well, to say nothing of the rest of the folk who gain their livelihood by work connected with prisons?

It is safe to say they would be just as helpless as any of the constables were they set adrift. In fact, they would have to be kept by the overburdened ratepayer were crime to suddenly cease, till something turned up.

There is no means of ascertaining the number of police courts there are in the country. Fixing them at 1,000, and the expense of maintaining them at £50 a week each, it is clear that to the police and prisons' staffs thrown out of employment by a reformed Britain there would be added all the people connected with police courts. As charity begins at home it is certain that the very magistrates who now denounce crime would champion it if increasing goodness imperilled their means of livelihood.

The stipend of the twenty-five metropolitan magistrates is £1,500 a year each, with the exception of Sir F. Lushington, who draws £1,800. Sir F. Lushington is said to regard all criminals as morally and mentally diseased persons, who should be prevented from perpetuating their species by treating them as lunatics. Would he advocate such a policy if the disappearance of the criminal left him without anything to do. It is impossible to say whether he would continue to advocate this policy if crime and criminal showed any signs of becoming extinct.

One thing is certain, that were such a thing to happen Sir F. Lushington and all his brother magistrates would have to rejoin their old companions of the Bar, and get a livelihood by pleading instead of sentencing. How would the 10,000 barristers of Great Britain like this? The complaint that the briefs relating to crime are practically monopolised by a few hands is already causing much discontent. The outcry not only from those who do most of the criminal business, but those who do none would largely increase were the present appalling competitors added to.

As it is not in human nature to approve of anything

calculated to destroy one means of subsistence, it is very doubtful if any of the one hundred clergymen who now minister to the spiritual wants of the inmates of H.M. gaols would not deplore the disappearance of the criminal. Out of the 28,000 clergymen in this country there are so many who find a difficulty in making both ends meet that the increase of even 100 additional unemployed clerics would provoke much grumbling.

Then there are the lawyers, a body of men said to be as keenly alive as any class in the community to their own interests. The brain reels at the bare contemplation of what would happen were 20,000 lawyers to be suddenly cast destitute on the world. Life in this country is so well organised that it has been said the whole fabric would totter and collapse at the faintest breath of revolution.

Revolution can be effected without bloodshed, and they are not to be treated lightly because violence plays no part in their accomplishments. Were everyone honest all the bills, contracts, promissory notes, and all the costly provisions instituted to safeguard the interests of the unwary would disappear. The conclusion, therefore, is obvious. Crime and criminals are so necessary to the well-being of society that, were goodness to become too common, we should have to manufacture criminals to save a number of trades from extinction, and thousands of deserving people from the horrors of poverty.

THE KING'S CLOCK.

SOME years ago the King (when Prince) received a present from an unknown hand of a magnificent clock of great artistic worth. It was accompanied by an unsigned note, stating that the clock was "a simple token of recognition of the Prince's kindness and courtesy in picking up a lame man's walking stick."

The Prince, when he received the clock, could not recall any such incident as the one mentioned. But after some reflection he remembered that, during the Queen's Jubilee year when public ceremonies were for a time almost incessant, he had occasion to pass along in front of a line of spectators. As he did so, they fell back somewhat precipitately, and a lame man in the crowd dropped his stick, and was unable to reach it. The stick fell near the Prince's feet; he stooped, picked it up, and passed it to the lame man, who, in the rush, had no opportunity to express any thanks.

The clock now occupies an honourable place in Marlborough House, but the King has not yet learnt the name of the donor.

ANOTHER LITTLE PATCH.

"ANOTHER little patch of red," said John Bull, gazing reflectively at an advance copy of the new map of South Africa.

"Another little patch of white," said Brother Boer, when he saw the white flag hoisted, "lie low for awhile—and then shoot."

"Another little patch of green," observed the absent-minded beggar, as he rose from the nearly-painted seat in the park, on which he had been reclining.

"Another little patch of brown," cried the gallant sportsman, raising his gun to his shoulder, while the inquisitive little bunny sat up on his hind legs and looked round inquiringly.

"Another little patch of crimson," remarked little Willie, after spilling half a jar of raspberry jam down his pinafore.

"Another little patch of dandy-grey-russet," growled Tommy Tattersall as he dubiously examined a triangular section dovetailed into the seat of his what-d'ye-call-em's.

"Another big patch of black," chortled the editor of P.W. as he noted the half-column of small type on "Page 16," representing names and subscriptions to the FRESH AIR FUND!

P.S.—Is there any connection between you and that last patch?

EVERY READER A WRITER.

If you are walking in the street in town or country and observe something curious, however insignificant it may seem to you, make a mental note of it. If it is something you cannot understand, so much the better. When you get home jot down your idea on a piece of paper, together with your name and address, and send it to the Editor in an envelope marked "IDEA."

If the note which you send is considered of sufficient interest to justify our making inquiries and publishing an article on the subject, you will be paid for the article at the rate of

TWO GUINEAS A COLUMN.

You are not required to write the article, only to supply the idea.

You may send as many ideas as you like, and there is no reason why you should not make £10 a week in this way.

If the same idea be sent in by several readers, the money will be paid to the person whose suggestion first reaches us. If a reader forwards a subject for an article we have already by us naturally he cannot expect payment.



THE MEN WHO REALLY RUN THE EMPIRE.

They are the Permanent Officers, and Change of Government doesn't Affect them.

WE naturally associate the running of the Empire with the men who figure in the House of Commons and in the Lords in office.

But they are merely representative of departments, and so far as their "material" goes are dependent upon the permanent officials who control the complex machinery by which the State is governed. When an office in the Government is filled by a genius and a statesman, he gets a grasp of his department which compels the admiration of the permanent officials, but generally speaking, even the successful statesman is often merely a theorist, and the permanent official has to do the "filling in" with facts and figures in support.

The British Empire is well served in its permanent officials, and her statesmen of all parties very properly place great confidence and reliance in these gentlemen.

Our system of government has, not inaptly, been compared to a limited liability company. In the British Empire Ltd., all British citizens are shareholders. The Cabinet for the time-being are the directors, who define the policy of the company, but it is the permanent officials who carry it out. Very few of the shareholders know these heads of departments even by name, and the work of their office is generally associated with the member of the Government for the time-being who presides over the office in question.

We hear a great deal in these days about the Navy and Army. The Permanent Secretary to the Admiralty is Sir Evan Macgregor, K.C.B., who is in his fifty-ninth year. This is the man who knows whether the Navy is equal to its work or not; for he has had chief permanent control of this department for seventeen years. His mother was a daughter of the late Admiral Sir T. M. Hardy, and he married the daughter of Colonel W. A. Middleton, C.B., the year he was appointed to his present office. He was educated at Charterhouse, as also was Sir Courtney Boyle.

The office of Permanent Under-Secretary to the War Office is filled by Sir Ralph Henry Knox, K.C.B. He was born in 1836, was educated at Trinity College, Dublin, and at the age of twenty he made his first acquaintance with the War Office. He ascended the ladder step by step, and in 1882 was appointed Accountant-General, which post he held until 1897, when he was placed in his present position, which has by no means been a sinecure. His salary is £2,000 per annum.

The Board of Education which has displaced the old Education Department has charge of the third line of national defence, and its task is to develop and utilise the brain power of the nation. The man at the wheel in this department is one of the most valuable of our public servants—Sir George Wm. Kekewich, K.C.B., D.C.L. He succeeded to the office of secretary to the Education Department in 1890, and since 1899 he has also been secretary of the Science and Art Department. He is a thorough believer in this department, and is a true friend of education. He is the fourth son, and his late father was M.P. for South Devon. Sir George married the daughter of Mr. L. W. Buck, the M.P. for North Devon. He was educated at Eton and Balliol College, Oxford, where he came off with flying colours.

The Treasury has been very much called upon since the war broke out in 1899. It is a department which makes the rank and file shareholder's mouth water when he scans the salary list. The First Lord and the Chancellor of the Exchequer draw £5,000 each per annum; there are three Junior Lords at £1,000 each per annum, a Patronage Secretary at £2,000, a Financial Secretary at £2,000, and finally the Permanent Secretary, whose office is worth from £2,000 to £2,500. He has an Assistant-Secretary at £1,500. There is also an army of private secretaries and other officials at salaries ranging from £100 to £1,500. Sir Francis Mowatt, K.C.B., is the present Permanent Secretary to the Treasury. On Budget night in the House the voice is the voice of the Chancellor of the Exchequer, but the hand is the hand of the Permanent Secretary. Sir Francis was born in 1837, and was educated at Winchester and St. John's College, Oxford.

Perhaps the most important post in our administration is that held by Sir T. H. Sanderson, K.C.B., K.C.M.G., who is permanent secretary at the Foreign Office. It is a position of the greatest delicacy, for a false step may mean war, or, at any rate, undesirable foreign complications.

The Colonial Office has played an important part in recent years. The permanent secretary is Sir E. Wingfield, K.C.B. What this gentleman knows about South African politics and personages would make the fortune of a journalist in a day. Messrs. Kruger, Leyds, and Co. would also give much to be in his confidence.

Then there is the Home Office, the Local Government Board, and the General Post Office, the permanent secretaries of which are Sir Kenelm E. Digby, K.C.B., Mr. S. B. Provis, O.B., and Sir G. H. Murray, K.C.B., respectively. All these are important offices and by no means over-remunerated, none of the salaries exceeding £2,000. But for these and other permanent officials, no Government elected by the people could run the British Empire.

Hazel Harlow will visit all the big provincial towns. See **SHORT STORIES.**

FORTUNES MISSED BY HOLIDAYS.

Penalties People Paid for Pleasure.

EIGHT thousand pounds is a tolerably long price to pay for a summer holiday, but it cost a Mr. Sewell, a Liverpool merchant, something exceeding that sum to spend three bright weeks at the seaside last year.

On the morning of the day this gentleman was to take his family away for their holidays, he rushed up to his office to have his last look round, and settle about a few small matters he had been unable to attend to the day before. He got through his work in double-quick time, for he had arranged to leave by a certain train. Just as he was leaving the office, however, two letters arrived. He put them in his pocket, and rushed home; he got into a lounge suit and romped off with his wife and children for the seaside. So thoroughly did he enjoy himself that he never gave a thought to the letters in the pocket of his business suit until the morning after the holidays, when he donned the black coat and put his hand in his breast pocket, where he found the letters, one of which would have meant a cool £8,000 clear profit to him if its terms had been promptly accepted by cable.

There is a peculiar will in Somerset House which made a bequest of property worth £12,000 under rather strange conditions. The owner of the property was an elderly lady named Hogg, and her next of kin was a nephew. Reading between the lines of this will one infers that Mrs. Hogg was not altogether satisfied that her nephew was a dutiful young man, or sufficiently attentive to her to merit her nice little estate, for whereas she bequeathed it all to him in the will, she subsequently added a codicil to the effect that unless he called to see her at least once before her death the bequest was not to stand, but the property was to be divided in a manner she fully

EXPLAINED IN THE CODICIL.

Now, it happened that at the time this codicil was duly signed and attested, the nephew was cramming for a stiff examination, and no sooner had he been up for this, than on the advice of his doctor, he went off to the Tyrol for a complete change and rest. Such is life! He had been away only a short time when his aunt, who had long been in feeble health, fell ill. The nephew was sent for, but it was some days before his exact whereabouts could be discovered and he could be acquainted with his aunt's condition. Although he was, of course, totally ignorant of the nature of the codicil to his aunt's will, at once upon hearing the news of the illness he started back to England to see her. But, as luck would have it, he arrived too late to save the estate, and his little holiday in the Tyrol was the means of his losing a handsome fortune.

The head of a once-famous firm of engineers not only missed an enormous fortune but brought his business to ruin by taking a fortnight's holiday. His firm made a speciality of certain machinery, for which they held patents enabling them to turn out more machines quickly, and therefore more cheaply, than any other firm. The firm was so rapidly making a fortune that it was contemplating turning itself into a big company, when the head received a letter from an unknown mechanic who said he had just secured patents for some marked improvements in the class of machines the firm manufactured, and he was anxious for an interview to explain the same with a view to selling the rights for immediate cash.

The head wrote his correspondent asking for particulars, and went away for his holiday, during the early part of which period he received a letter from the mechanic declining to commit the details of his patents to paper, but expressing his readiness to travel to where the great engineer was holiday-making and put the whole thing before him. The suggestion was absolutely opposed to the engineer's sentiments; he was

TAKING HIS HOLIDAY

and did not wish to be troubled with business matters, but he made an appointment at his office for a day or two after his return, and trusted that "the improvements were as real as the inventor imagined, and that, if so, they might come to some satisfactory arrangement."

The inventor failed to keep the appointment, and in reply to an inquiry why he had so failed informed the engineer that, as he had stated in his first letter, it had been necessary for him to obtain immediate cash for his invention and he had, therefore, sold the patents to another firm.

For £800 the inventor had sold to another firm improvements for which the holiday-maker's firm would, if they could have seen the full value of the invention, have paid £50,000.

Needless to say, every year dozens of small fortunes slip through the fingers of Stock Exchange speculators who make it a rule, as some do, to throw business entirely aside when they are taking their holidays. Last autumn a friend of the writer's missed in a week a little fortune of eight times what he makes on an average in a year. He bought a considerable quantity of stock he believed would in a few months' time rise a point or two and enable him to sell at a profit. He put them away, and went for his holidays without the faintest suspicion that they would rise within a couple of months. But within a week they had gone up eight points, and before he was back at his office they were two points below what he had paid for them, and they have not risen more than one point since. In this way a comfortable profit of between £5,000 and £8,000 was lost over a single deal.

NOT THE GIRL FOR HIM.

THE father was quite anxious for his son to marry, and on every occasion he was picking out what he thought was a suitable girl. One night at a dinner the old gentleman sat next to a very attractive young woman, and on his way home he was loud in her praises. "My boy," he said, "she's the very girl for you."

"Not much," replied the boy with peculiar emphasis.

"But I say she is," persisted papa.

"And I say not," insisted the son.

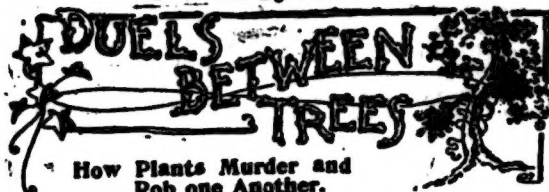
The father became testy on the subject.

"You're hard to please. You don't expect a woman to be perfect, do you?"

"No."

"Then why isn't this one just the girl for you?"

"Because," replied the young man, with an effort, "she's for some other fellow. She told me so last night."



ONE of the greatest reprobates is the india-rubber tree of the Central American forests. It will often begin its career at the very top of a forest giant like the wild fig; it sends forth its thick leaves and pushes its roots down to get nourishment from the fig-tree. Gradually, as it obtains the required nutriment, its little roots descend the bark on the outside and get into the earth; it might get its food now from the ground, but it retains its grip on its victim, sucking and squeezing it till it is dead, and the india-rubber itself has taken the place of the fig-tree, the crumbling remains of which it encircles. With a young and vigorous tree the murderer would have very little chance, but its victim is usually old and consequently less healthy.

In the tropical forests we have the best opportunities of watching plant robbers and murderers, but we can see many instances on our own islands. The clematis montana is a pretty plant with a profusion of white, starlike blossoms; its beauty attracts everybody, yet it fastens itself on any tree and deliberately smothers it, shutting out the air as effectually as a beautiful woman might stifle with a pillow a man who had not returned her love and had fixed his attentions on another. You may see a Scotch fir now being killed in this way near Redhill.

The mistletoe is a notorious sinner; its berries contain a sticky substance for the very purpose of enabling them to adhere to the rough bark of trees—they would not live if they fell to the ground. Once in a cranny of the bark, it develops, throws out roots which pierce the tree and drink in the juice. It is a slow death for the tree, for mistletoe does not grow rapidly; the involuntary host is stunted somewhat in its own development and has a hard struggle to find food for both; it is a long and lingering death.

The broom rape is a family of small thieves, the members of which fasten on to the roots of broom, furze, clover and other plants; they are more insidious than most others, as they get at the roots of the plants on which they fatten. It is, perhaps, an example of poetic justice to find that the ivy is one of their victims, for ivy itself must come under the head of murdering plants; it throws its tendrils around trees as well as walls, and so envelopes them that at length they are smothered.

We scarcely ever think of ferns as plants likely to bring about death or injury to other subjects of the vegetable kingdom, yet they do act the part of robber and murderer. It is occasionally possible to see a giant oak with horizontal limbs hanging over a river; the ferns and moss fasten on these limbs, and by their weight and smothering effect the branch decays and breaks off. Take a walk in a Scottish forest and note a tree that has been blown down in a storm; go again in a short time, and you will find ferns and moss on the trunk, covering it and obtaining at least some food from it, and still later you will observe that the fallen tree is entirely hidden.

The dodder, of which there are at least four varieties—two having been introduced by accident within recent years—is a thread-like plant, resembling a red harp string. It attacks thistles, nettles and various soft plants that come in its way; in India this kind of dodder grows thicker, and it accordingly goes for bigger game, encircling large trees and taking the juice which they need for their own sustenance. It is not at all uncommon for large trees to be killed by the tropical variety.

Of the recently imported species of dodder, one attacks flax and the other devotes its attention to clover; they have been known to destroy whole fields of flax and clover. Readers will recognise the dodder by the fact that it looks like a piece of string on which is set at intervals a flower resembling a tiny rosette.

The eye-bright, a common wild flower that grows on heaths, would hardly be suspected of robbing its neighbours for food, but botanists tell us that it attaches itself to the root of its neighbours, sometimes so tightly that it cannot be separated. The eye-bright is so termed on account of its white flower, which has the appearance of an eye. A decoction made from this plant was said to be good for weak eyes.

EMPLOYERS WHO DISGUISE THEMSELVES.

Some Slim Tricks for Finding out what Happens Behind their Backs.

A big London firm is managed by two astute partners who each take a turn at foreign travel, leaving the other at home to see that all goes smoothly. A year and a-half ago the absent partner was taken seriously ill while in South Africa; he journeyed home when convalescent, and was duly visited by his colleague, who was so much struck by the invalid's strange appearance that he admitted he would not have recognised him had he met him in the street or in any public place. Thereupon the following conversation took place:

"I declare you might go down to the office to-morrow and not be known to a man in the place, so altered and altogether different you look."

"Well, you see, I've lost my hair on the top and grown a beard, and I am two stone less in weight."

"What a good way of finding out which are our really good servants it would be, if you would consent to go down as ledger-clerk for a few weeks, while I have a run round Scotland for a much-needed holiday."

"That's a good idea. Let us try it, by all means. You go to business as usual in the morning and I'll drop in about noon and be engaged as temporary ledger-clerk."

The scheme worked marvellously. The new ledger-clerk was not suspected by one of the two score men over whom he had previously acted as master. He arrived punctually at nine-thirty every morning, and left at

SIX O'CLOCK EVERY EVENING.

On the departure of the partner who had been in charge during the other's absence, an unmistakable sickness set in. It is true that the bulk of the men arrived punctually, simply because the old servant who had the custody of the time sheet absolutely declined to be any party to "squaring" matters, but it was noticed that quite a dozen of the employees slipped out again, after signing their names, in order to partake of breakfast that should have been eaten at home. Other men left work half an hour, or even more, before the accepted time.

Others read the daily papers for long stretches. One or two men sent the messengers out for eatables and sporting publications, and there was a general holiday air prevalent.

The new ledger clerk quietly observed everything and made notes. He listened to the gossip about "one of the bosses" who had been taken ill; he heard of betting and speculations that some of the travellers in the employ of the firm indulged in; he was able to judge to a nicety of the trustworthiness of the individuals who imagined themselves far removed from the eyes of those from whom they received their salaries, and he heard with surprise and not a little alarm of all sorts of arrangements for starting a rival "show" when some expected "ship" arrived.

The immediate outcome of this ruse was the dismissal of eight men, to whom it was explained that only employees who worked as well in the absence of their employers as in their presence were required. No "sweating" system was in force, and, therefore, the masters had a right to expect fair service in return for good wages.

Another instance of an employer in disguise is reported of a wealthy woman whose deceased husband owned and left to her a large retail drapery business in Leeds. Not being satisfied with the returns, she applied at her own place of business for work as a cashier. This was arranged through one of the shop-walkers, who was one of three to whom

SHE WAS PERSONALLY KNOWN.

As days passed, and she got into the way of receiving the tickets and cash, her suspicion fell upon two of the assistants. After a few vain attempts it was discovered that these two men made out several tickets a day in such a manner as to defraud their employer of ten shillings on each transaction. For instance, a customer's bill would total up to eleven shillings and sixpence, or fourteen shillings and elevenpence. On the customer's part of the bill the correct amount would be entered, but on the counterfoil one shilling and sixpence or four shillings and elevenpence would be written. The other ten shillings were slipped into the dishonest person's pockets.

The proprietor of an East-end lodging-house, whose own home was in the country forty miles away, recently insisted, much to his good wife's alarm, on putting on a set of false whiskers and personally applying for a bed-room. His enterprise resulted in an "eye-opener" for he discovered that threepence per room was being levied over and above the regulation price per night, and this threepence went, of course, into a pocket other than his own.

The rooms, moreover, were not so clean and tidy as they should have been, and there was, obviously, no reason for not dismissing the manager on the spot.

There is, it appears, still a good deal of truth in the saying that "when the cat's away the mice will play," but it is pretty clear from the foregoing authentic cases, that there is nowadays a tendency to deprive an often generous employer of what is his by right of every law framed for the benefit of the community.

Fettered Lives.

A STORY OF THE PRISON AND THE STAGE.

By Henry Farmer.

READ THIS FIRST.

REGINALD STANLEY is convicted on circumstantial evidence of the murder of Sir Ronald Dunnaton, but the death sentence is commuted to penal servitude for life on the ground of his youth. He leaves behind one convinced in his innocence, his sweetheart, Esmée Conyers.

Four years pass away, and taking advantage of a fog, Stanley and a fellow convict, Cully Scott, alias the "Smasher," escape to the railway line. A train is passing, bearing the theatrical company of the drama *Fettered Lives* back to London. Seated in a carriage by himself is Theodosius Gilderoy, the stage manager, a great man in the theatrical world. He is astonished to see at the window the face of Cully Scott, and a few seconds after the convicts have forced their way into his carriage.

At the sight of Cully, Gilderoy is alarmed. The Smasher, trading on something he evidently knows about Gilderoy's past, compels his silence, and, further, demands that the manager shall provide him and Stanley with suits of clothes from his portmanteau. He is frightened into agreeing, and the convicts thus reach London unnoticed save by one actor, Harley Garside, who observes the two strange men in Gilderoy's clothes, and confides the news to Austyn Selincourt, to whom he also gives several valuable cases of jewels he has secured by some criminal means.

When Selincourt hears that one of the fugitives is his cousin, Rex Stanley, he is filled with alarm, but consoles himself by resolving to "get on his track."

Cully Scott, pushing his power over Gilderoy to the farthest point, demands that he shall find employment for him in *Fettered Lives* company, and a part for his gentleman colleague. Gilderoy, after much protesting, is driven into consenting, and Rex Stanley, under the name of Keith Leslie, is cast for the part of Dick Selby, a broken-down wastrel. Rex knows nothing of acting or stage customs, but resolves to try his luck. Esmée Conyers is also in the company.

Simultaneously with the entry of the new and unknown member of the company the news of the escape of two convicts from Bleakmoor is circulated, one of them Rex Stanley, the Dunnaton murderer.

Stanley distinguishes himself as an actor. Esmée Conyers recognises him when he comes on the stage during the rehearsal, and is overcome. Subsequently Cully Scott arranges an interview between the two at his lodgings. At the next day's rehearsal Austyn Selincourt observes Stanley leaving the theatre, and asks Garside who it is.

CHAPTER IX. (continued).

Selincourt Tracts Dick Selby.

"Who's that?" repeated Garside. "Why, Keith Leslie, who's taken up the part of Dick Selby in place of Paulin."

Garside had been in time to catch a back view of Stanley as he swung round a corner. Selincourt was himself again, languid and looking a little bored.

"Leslie—Keith Leslie!" he drawled. "No; then I must be mistaken. Only somehow, for the moment, his figure seemed familiar to me."

"He's amateurish at present; but he's got the makings of a big actor in him. Gilderoy has spotted the fact, too. He was absolutely civil—almost toadied to him this morning."

There was a thoughtful expression on Selincourt's face as he stroked his tawny moustache.

"A new hand at the game, eh? You'd not heard of him I suppose, before he joined the company?"

"No. Gilderoy probably picked him up somewhere. He seems a really decent fellow. There's something about him that is good form."

"But—er—I don't quite see why Gilderoy should toady to him."

Garside smiled.

"Don't you? I do. He's realised that there's money in him. He'll be trying to get him to sign a contract before long. And if Leslie's not wide-awake, he'll find himself bound down for a number of years at a certain, and none too big a salary, and Gilderoy's slave. I mean to give him a friendly tip."

Selincourt had put his questions in a most casual fashion. Garside, quick of perception as he was, had no inkling of an underlying motive.

"By the way, apropos of Gilderoy, heard nothing more of the fawn-coloured overcoat affair, I suppose?"

"No!" answered Garside, with a quick, uneasy glance at his companion.

"Well, there are one or two little matters I want to talk over with you," Selincourt hailed a hansom. "Let's cab it to the flat."

Selincourt's flat was situated in a handsome block of buildings overlooking Piccadilly.

"Privacy," he said, as he admitted himself with a latch-key, "is a bachelor's privilege. Servants are a confounded nuisance. The old woman who comes in occasionally, and the commissionaire, are sufficient for all my requirements."

"Bachelor, you are," said Garside, as they entered the exquisitely furnished sitting-room, "and bachelor I should say you will remain. Selincourt, have you ever been in love?"

"Heaven forbid, old chap! Women are all right—as a hobby; but to take 'em seriously—Great Scott, no! To fall in love is the worst calamity that can befall a man. He loses his head; puts a master over himself; develops a conscience; and ten to one his nerve goes. And as to marriage—well, personally, nothing under a couple of millions, invested in Consols, would induce me to take the plunge. And now we're on this subject, let me tender you a piece of advice. With regard to his charming Esmée, do what you like, but don't fall in love with her! Help yourself to a weed, old man."

Garside's sallow face flushed up.

"Look here, Selincourt, our views on women differ. Only let me tell you this: if instead of meeting you when I did, I had met—well, a woman capable of exercising a good influence over me, I should have been very different to what I am now! Let's drop the subject. What do you want to talk to me about?"

"The Duchess of Ancaster's diamonds. The dinner was a big success. I can give you full details now. Mix yourself a drink, whilst I sketch you out a plan of the place."

Selincourt set himself down at a bureau that would have made the mouth of a connoisseur in antiquities to water, and taking up a fine-nibbed pen, was busily employed on a sheet of paper for some twenty minutes. It was a piece of draughtsmanship that would have done credit to a professional architect. Finished, he handed it to Garside, and leaning over the back of his chair, pointed out particulars.

"Enter by window A—ordinary shutters, no alarm bells attached; pass along corridor B, and take the second door on the right, C; probably locked, but ordinary lock. Room D, the Duchess's boudoir. E, apparently a Chippendale wardrobe, but in reality a kind of vestibule to the strong room. Wardrobe locked, but ordinary lock. Caution required here; but bedroom, G, is separated from boudoir by passage, F.F. More caution required in tackling the strong room. The greatest care must be taken in disconnecting the electric alarm. Kindly glance for a moment at the side-sketch—a front view of the strong-room door. In the centre hinge, marked by that star, is a small, movable pin; remove this and the electric connection is broken. Whatever you do, don't forget to remove that pin!"

Garside's dark eyes were blazing. The lines on his forehead had deepened. He was following every detail with all the keenness of an enthusiast.

"Everything's clear as day," he said quickly. "Selincourt, you're a genius!"

Selincourt sauntered up the room and down again, and paused in front of Garside.

"Articled to an architect once. The governor had an idea that every fellow ought to have a trade. I couldn't stick to it for more than a couple of months—stuffy offices, monotonous routine, and deadly dull clerks. You know the sort of chap—lives in the suburbs, half-a-dozen kids, rides a bicycle on Sundays, and owns a season ticket. Still, the time wasn't wasted. Now, about the lock—he crossed to the bureau, unlocked a drawer, and took out something wrapped up in tissue-paper—it's a combination lock, the six letters on the dial working in connection with the key. You will have no difficulty in remembering the master-word—the languid eyes twinkled a little, the mouth smiled beneath the moustache—"it is 'Austyn.'"

Garside shot him a quick, meaning glance.

"A little whim of the Duchess. I told you we were great friends, and my name, don't you see, just happens to be the required six letters!"

"You said just now you'd never been in love, Selincourt."

"The truth; but I make love sometimes for business purposes. Here is the wax impression of the key." Selincourt had handed over the little tissue-paper bundle; "it gave me far and away the most trouble. Everything quite clear?"

"I should be a thick-skulled ass if it wasn't. You possess the gift of making things unmistakably clear."

Selincourt mixed himself a brandy-and-soda, and lighted a cigar, while Garside concentrated his attention on the plan.

When, after a few minutes silence, Garside glanced up, it was to find Selincourt's eyes fastened fixedly upon him.

"Garside, so far we have had no hitch. We've not done badly; but there's a deuced lot of risk, and the game will soon be played out. I fancy that I have found a shorter and a safer cut to fortune."

Garside glanced at him inquiringly.

"It's a matter of three-quarters of a million"—there was a peculiar metallic ring in Selincourt's voice—"and you've never found me niggardly. I am not absolutely sure; but I believe I know where to look for my cousin Stanley!"

Garside's eyes dilated with a sudden look of nervous horror.

"Look here," he whispered hoarsely, "you've got something in your mind's eye I don't care about. We've gone a good way along the road to the devil together, Selincourt, but I'm not going to keep you company over this last stretch."

Selincourt's eyes had never left his face.

"Garside, to-morrow night when you pull off that affair at the Duchess of Ancaster's, you will carry a revolver. If you get into trouble, you would shoot!"

"That's different. I'm on my mettle then. There's no cold-blooded meditation. And I shouldn't shoot—to kill. So far my hands are clean. Laugh at me if you will, but I've got some conscience still hanging about in my soul. Friction

with you, Selincourt, has worn most of it away. But some's left."

Selincourt still fixed him with his cold, grey eyes. There was a nervous expression on Garside's twitching features, as if he were afraid lest what was left of his better self should be conquered by the other's stronger will.

"No, Selincourt"—his tone was half-desperate, half-defiant—"not for all the gold in the world!"

A silence followed, only broken by the ticking of the ormolu clock. Selincourt flicked the ash off the end of his cigar.

"But"—his voice was low, but bitingly clear—"for a woman!"

Garside sprang to his feet, as if a finger had been suddenly placed on an open sore.

"Curse you! What do you mean?"

Selincourt laid a hand on his shoulder.

"Garside, old chap," he said quietly, "you and I are far too tightly bound together to quarrel, or have any unpleasantness. We'll drop the subject—for the present."

Something like a sigh of relief escaped Garside. When he had said of himself that some remnant of conscience yet remained to him, he had spoken a truth; but the man who frequents the crooked paths of life is better quit of conscience altogether. Intellectually of weaker fibre than Selincourt, he had been, up to a certain point, easily moulded in the hands of the man whose strength lay in his inflexible will, his overweening selfishness, and his utter lack of principle and conscience.

Garside's feelings towards his superior were a strange mixture of fascination, affection, and fear. There were times when his bonds chafed him. Selincourt had long ago gauged the character of his subordinate partner to a nicety. Artistic as a cracksman, artistic as an actor, he possessed the uncertain artistic temperament. A man of moods, he was easily elated, and easily depressed. His energy was of a nervous order. He was at his best when he was under the influence of some such stimulant as excitement or passion. The sullenness that sometimes mastered him, and his occasional outbursts of temper, were both characteristic of an intensely passionate and jealous disposition.

"There, old chap," continued Selincourt, "I'm sorry to have ruffled you. Mix yourself another drink."

"No, thank you. I shall want a clear head and steady hand for to-morrow night. I'm off now. When shall I see you again?"

"Rehearsing to-morrow!"

"Yes."

"Very well, I'll look you up at the theatre."

The look of puzzled uneasiness had not left Garside as he set out towards his lodgings. Why had Selincourt suddenly gone off at a tangent, and dragged a woman into the business?

Had he been thinking of Esmée Conyers? Garside's sallow features flushed. Had Selincourt realised the fierce intensity of his love for her—a love that, pricked by his remnant of a conscience, he had been vainly trying to smother—and did he mean to make use of his passion to further his own ends?

Yet, puzzle his brains as he would, Garside could not arrive at any possible connection between Esmée Conyers and Rex Stanley, the escaped convict and Selincourt's cousin.

Austyn Selincourt lay back in an easy chair, his eyes half-closed, the tips of his firm white fingers pressed together—his usual attitude of meditation.

"Keith Leslie," he muttered; "Gilderoy probably picked him up somewhere. Yes, I may be wrong; but my idea is that Gilderoy picked him up that night when the train carrying the *Fettered Lives* company came to a standstill in Bleakmoor cutting. I've seen Keith Leslie's back; to-morrow I mean to have a look at his face!"

CHAPTER X.

In which Austin Selincourt Sees Keith Leslie's Face.

THE actors and actresses of the *Fettered Lives* company were gathered together on the dimly-lighted stage of the Globe Theatre. In the background stood Cully Scott, alias the Smasher, with another alias now, Joe Nelson. It was his first appearance in his official capacity of baggage-man. He had introduced himself to Cobb, the company's stage-carpenter—an introduction that had been duly moistened with beer—and had managed to elicit from him, without appearing to do so, information on certain matters connected with his duties about which he happened to be rather hazy.

Stage-manager Gilderoy was late.

"He'll turn up in a towering rage," said Sam Blobs, the gloomy comedian, to Luxmore, the stage-detective, "and make us all suffer for his own confounded unpunctuality."

Laddie—Blobs addressed a comrade as "laddie" quite irrespective of his age—"take it from me, the Stage is going to the dogs. What with lords and dukes and Society beauties who can't mum for toffee, and incompetent stage-managers, and a rotten, corruptible Press, the game's not worth the candle. I'd chuck it to-morrow if I could get another job. Ah, laddie, it was different in the old days. When I played first grave-digger to Phelps's Hamlet—"

Luxmore edged away. Once Blobs began his reminiscences of the old days, there was no knowing when he would end.

Gilderoy was still absent when Rex Stanley passed down on to the stage. Friendly greetings met him on every side.

The company had come to the conclusion that Keith Leslie was "one of the right sort." There was no vestige of "side" about him; he was a gentleman—and he could act. Once let a man show himself to be "one of the right sort," he will not lack good friends—in deed as well as in words—in stage-land.

Miss Zoe Deliale, the leading lady, rouged and powdered up to concert pitch, eyed him with approbation. He was certainly better-looking than Bert Radstone, the juvenile lead, with whom she had been flirting outrageously for the last three months, and of whom she was beginning to weary a little. She wished Stanley good-morning in the sweetest of tones, and shot him a killing glance. Stanley's eyes wandered away from her to Esmée Conyers. Harley Garside was talking to her, his hand resting on Gladys Mellor's shoulder, as she stood beside.

"It wasn't Scott, the Smasher, that they caught, after all; but another fellow."

Bert Radstone, looking more washed-out than ever, was talking to Tompkins, the assistant stage-manager, a thin-faced little man with a worried look, who was one of Gilderoy's

pet butta. The words reached Stanley. His expression did not change. He had learnt self-control; but something like a pang went through his heart. In the street, in the theatre, the past seemed always with him. He moved across to Esmée Conyers. He could speak to her now. Cully Scott, in the dark background, followed him with his needle eyes. But the greeting was outwardly formal, for all the quickened throbbing of two hearts. Besides Scott's, other eyes were watching them. Miss Delisle, one of those ladies who demand the admiration of every male being within reach, felt a little piqued. Formal as the greeting had been, Garside's jealous eyes had seen the colour heighten on Esmée's cheeks. He was conscious of a sharp twinge. Then, like a flash, his mind harked back to the thought that had occurred to him when, two days previously, Esmée Conyers had fainted. Was there something between them? Or was his jealous imagination playing him pranks?

At that moment an interruption occurred in the shape of the stage-door keeper carrying a telegram to the assistant stage-manager. The announcement that Gilderoy was indisposed and unable to take the rehearsal was greeted with a chorused sigh of relief.

"Gout, you bet!" said Blobsa. "Gilderoy's always making a beast of himself."

"Now, then, ladies and gentlemen, clear please!" cried Tompkins, on whom the duty of conducting the rehearsal had devolved. "We'll only take Mr. Leslie's scenes."

Dick Selby's opening scenes have been previously described. Stanley had just finished the soliloquy that ended with the words "Oh, God! what might have been!" and Harley Garside was on the point of making his entrance as Jake Brood, when a hansom rattled up to the stage-door.

Austyn Selincourt alighted, and passed into the door-keeper's little room.

"Rehearsal over yet?"

"No, sir," answered the door-keeper; "only just started."

"Mr. Garside on the stage?"

"Yes, sir, that's him speaking now."

The voice was distinctly audible.

"Yes, you will"—it was the harsh, rasping voice of Jake

Brood, the fence of the play—"yes, you will! You'll write that letter, Dick Selby. Five shining yellow-boys for you, if you do! Think of that, meat and drink for a week—drink brandy if you like. Come, come! You'll write the letter and sign that name to it. Five shining yellow-boys!"

Then followed the hoarse, impassioned answer of the tempted man.

"And I tell you 'no!' You've dragged me down low enough already; you've plied me with the drink that's rotted my body and soul; but sooner than sign that name, I'll see you hanged first!"

Austyn Selincourt was listening. His lips had tightened under the tawny moustache.

"Who's that speaking now?"

"Mr. Keith Leslie, sir."

"Ah, indeed! Good stage voice, eh? They won't be finished for some time, I suppose?"

"No, sir."

"Confounded nuisance!" Selincourt consulted his watch.

"I must see Mr. Garside. Would there—er—be any objection to my slipping down on to the stage for a moment?"

"It's against the rules, sir," said the door-keeper, shaking his head.

Selincourt thrust a hand into his waistcoat pocket and, with an absent-minded expression, jingled some coins.

"Well, sir, seeing that Mr. Gilderoy ain't here, perhaps you might slip down for a minute."

A coin changed hands.

"Down the stairs, sir, and first turning to the left."

Selincourt sauntered leisurely down. Reaching the entrance to the stage, he drew aside the curtain that veiled it, and peered through. He was invisible to those on the stage.

The T-piece furnished forth the only light. A stack of piled-up scenery cast a shadow athwart the entrance. The scene between Dick Selby and Jake Brood was still in progress.

Languor had gone from Selincourt's eyes as he stared at the figure of Dick Selby, sitting at a table, his face buried in his arms.

"Write it!" hissed Jake Brood, "or I'll turn copper's nark, and sell you to the police. They want you badly, Dicky! It'll be a long stretch. No brandy in prison—water, skilly, and an eight ounce loaf, yes; but no brandy! You shall write it, d'ye hear, or I'll get you put away for the rest of your natural!"

Selincourt's eyes had never left the figure at the table. One firm white hand was tugging almost savagely at his tawny moustache.

At last the expected movement came. Selby raised his head. The light from the T-piece fell upon his face.

"Give me pen and paper," he whispered hoarsely, "and—

and brandy!"

Selincourt drew in his breath sharply. His eyes dilated and gleamed like polished steel. The tightly-drawn lips relaxed.

He had run his quarry to earth. This was Rex Stanley, right enough!

CHAPTER XL

Cully Scott Demonstrates that his Alias, the Smasher, is no Misnomer.

"Don't do nothing to call attention to yourself and the young lady. 'Cos why? There might be folks about what knows that 'er real name, afore she took to play-actin' was Amy Cunningham, which you told me it was, and there might be folks that remembered that it was a Amy Cunningham that was the cause of the quarrel between you and yer uncle, Sir Ronald Dunnaston. It ain't likely, p'raps, but we are to think of these things."

Such had been Cully Scott's advice to Stanley on the previous evening; but at the conclusion of the rehearsal—brief, owing to the absence of Gilderoy—Stanley had a hard struggle to master his longing to escort Esmée to her lodgings. As it was, he lingered on the stage, talking commonplaces, yet happy in her presence, and would have lingered longer had not a husky cough reached him from the shadowy background where Cully Scott stood, apparently listening with deepest attention to what Cobb, the stage-carpenter, was whispering. Garside had also remained behind, and was talking to

Tompkins. When Stanley left, he joined Esmée and Gladys Mellor.

"Leslie will make a big hit in that part, Miss Conyers, or I'm very much mistaken. I suppose you had never met him before?"

She did not hesitate to lie for the sake of the man she loved; but her face flushed scarlet.

"No. Come along, Gladys. Good-morning, Mr. Garside."

She turned almost abruptly and hurried away, not from any feeling of dislike to the man, but fearing to betray herself. During the past tour Garside had done her many little acts of kindness and courtesy, and she had been grateful. There had never been the slightest suspicion of coquetry on her part—coquetry was utterly foreign to her nature. His conduct had always been that of a gentleman. She had never dreamed of the passion that burned within him, and that, so far, though every day made the task more difficult, he had succeeded in masking.

Garside followed her with his eyes. He was breathing a little more quickly. He had seen the scarlet mount to her cheeks, and his jealous, vivid imagination was at work. Had she told him an untruth?

When, shortly after Esmée Conyers had left the theatre, Cully Scott emerged from the stage-door, there was a glow of pride on his bull-dog face. He had watched Stanley's performance that morning.

"Strike and 'ammer me!" he muttered, as he entered Drury Lane, "but my young toff 'as got it in 'im. So 'elp me! but 'e wiped the floor with the lot of 'em! And he a greenhorn at the game, too!"

Then the current of his thoughts change. Drury Lane was familiar ground to him, and his mouth twitched up into one of its grim smiles.

"'Ow this 'ere place brings back old times," said he to himself. "Only seems yesterday the coppers was arter me, five on 'em! Yes"—his needle eyes rested on a narrow archway leading into a squalid court beyond—"it was there I bashed down two on 'em. It was 'ot work. But, bless my 'eart, I'd a pal or two round about 'ere in those days, and once I was in the court I was as right as 'ouses. Yes, I've 'ad some lively times round 'ere!"

The Smasher gave something like a sigh of regret. A man does not throw off the habits of a life-time in a few days. It was not conscience or an abstract sense of morality that had caused him to turn his back on his old life. It was a question rather of personal devotion. Bashing a copper or cracking a crib would not help the young toff—to use his own phraseology—who had found his way into his heart, and to whom he had devoted himself with all the fidelity of his tenacious, bull-dog nature.

While thus ruminating, he caught sight of Esmée Conyers and Gladys Mellor ahead. The lane was a short cut through from the theatre to Bloomsbury.

"They makes a pretty picture, both on 'em," he thought, "it's a pretty little kid, with 'er fair 'air and blue eyes, and as fur Sweet'eat—well, there, I don't wonder at my young toff. She's jest a bit 'o pure gold, she is! But next time I 'ave a word with 'er on the quiet, I'll tell 'er it ain't the wisest thing to walk through the Lane, carrying yer purse in yer 'and; it's a temptin' of providence. Strike me! but when I was a youngster—"

Almost at that moment, a coarse, hulking fellow, a beaver cap drawn over his eyes, hurried out of an archway on the left, and, seeming not to see Esmée, jostled roughly against her. There was a sharp cry of pain! Savagely twisting her wrist, he had wrenched the purse out of her hand, and had darted down an alley on the right.

Cully Scott had seen! An imprecation rasped out from between his gritted teeth.

"Git 'ome, miss! Don't stay 'ere. Git!"

Hoarsely shouting out the words, he plunged down the alley in pursuit. Two loafers, skulking there, deliberately got in his way, and tried to trip him up. It was a mistake on their part. Cully Scott had not been nicknamed the Smasher without reason. His fists shot out like sledge hammers, and there were two limp lumps on the ground, beside a quantity of blood.

The alley led into a squalid court. Tall, dilapidated buildings—rookeries of crime, disease and misery—towered up in front and on either side, blotting out the sunlight and casting murky, unhealthy shadows over all. It was a court down which no policeman would have ventured alone. Half-dressed men and women were loitering out of the windows, railing at, joking with, or blaspheming the men, women, and children below.

Those in the court had opened out to let the thief pass, but closed to, and presented a human barrier to the Smasher. He went through it as a knife goes through butter. Some struck at him, others kicked, others tried to trip him. They slowed his pace a little, but did not stop him. He seemed endowed with the strength of four ordinary men. And there was such an ugly look of savagery on the bull-dog face that more than one man thought better of his first intention, and slipped out of his way. In spite of the turmoil, of blows given and taken, he had only lost sight of his man when he plunged into a narrow, dark, doorway. A moment later, two heavily-built men blocked the entrance.

"Out of my way!" rasped the Smasher.

"Out 'o your way. May you burn! Who are yer?"

"I'll show yer!"

The Smasher did. They were both strong men and showed fight, but they went down like nine-pins before him. The animal was uppermost now. His appetite for savagery had been whetted. With a husky cry, he raced down a dark passage. At the end, rickety stairs led upwards; but instinctively he plunged down the worn stone steps leading into the cellars. He had played the game before, with a difference—he had been the hunted man.

It was a veritable inferno into which he descended. Whole families were huddled together into one small fetid den. Light there was little or none. Where the cellars did not naturally open one into the other, the adjoining walls had been burrowed through. Through the darkness and semi-light, through ragged gaps in walls, treading on sleeping and drunken men and women, followed by a tornado of coarse oaths in which the shrill voices of children mingled, the Smasher raced on. Only a man who had trodden the track before could have found his way through that labyrinth of underground villainess. It was familiar ground to him, and he was moving

now at twice the speed of the man flying from him. A faint glimmer of light ahead, penetrating down a flight of stone steps that led up into the upper world, showed him his man in the act of ascending. A growl of savage joy burst from him. Then there was a crash as a stone jar, hurled out of the darkness behind, missed his head and shattered itself against the wall. A brickbat following struck him between his shoulders. It drew a sharp breath from him, but did not stop his career. He caught up his man halfway up the cellar steps.

"Got yer!" he hissed, dealing him a blow in the back that smashed him forward on to his face.

The man was up again, a second later, and facing round.

"Gibe back that purse," rasped out the Smasher, "afore I bashes the life out of yer!"

The answer was an oath and a blow. The Smasher ducked.

The man struck emptiness, lost his balance, and toppled forward. Before he could recover himself, the Smasher had grappled him round the waist, then, with a mighty heave, hurled him clean over his shoulder into the cellar below. He was on him again, a moment later, one knee driven into his chest, a huge, gnarled hand clutching his throat.

As if by magic the cellar had filled with ghoully figures—emaciated half-dressed men and women, little boys and girls with old, wizened faces, some wearing no other garment but a piece of sacking bound about their loins.

Go fur 'im—down 'im; it's Knock-out Bill 'e's got under 'im!"

There was an ugly rush; but before they could reach him, the Smasher was up, clutching something in his clenched right hand—Esmée Conyers' purse.

"Come on, all of yer!" he roared as he faced about, one foot pressed heavily on his late opponent's chest. "I'm waitin' for yer! What are we waitin' for?"

But there was no corresponding eagerness now on the part of the ghouls. It was different when he had been unpripered and kneeling.

"Yah! you're all white-livered, the bloomin' lot of yer!"

The Smasher removed his foot from the prostrate man.

"Git up!"

The man, still dazed and half stunned, staggered sullenly to his feet.

"Look 'ere, 'ave you 'ad enough, or shall I oblige yer with more? If you ain't satisfied, I'm ready for yer. The best out o' three rounds, and Gawd 'elp yer!"

A chorus from the ghouls, male and female, young and old:

"Yus, go on, Bill; you didn't 'ave fair play—go for 'im!"

Knock-out Bill suddenly pulled himself together. Without any preliminary formalities, he bore down on the Smasher like an infuriated bull. Three rounds were not necessary. Two blows settled the matter. The Smasher drove back the on-rushing man with a body blow that snapped two ribs, and followed it up with a left-hander that stretched him out senseless.

"Any more to the same tune?" he asked grimly.

There was no answer. The terrified ghouls shrunk back into the deeper darkness of the cellar.

"Then"—the Smasher gravely doffed his cap—"I wishes you all a very good afternoon!"

Esmée Conyers' loss had not been confined to her purse. After Scott had darted away in pursuit, while she yet stood dazed and bewildered, a rough crowd, seeming to spring from nowhere, closed around her and Gladys Mellor. Low-browed men and slatternly women pressed close and began to hustle. She felt a tug at her belt, and her watch and chain had gone. White and trembling with terror, she drew Gladys closer, and tried to force her way through the crowd. But the men and women only hustled the more, and someone tore a bracelet from her wrist. She would have been stripped of every visible thing of value about her, had not a warning voice shouted out:

"Scot! The cops!"

The crowd melted magically before the two policemen who hurried up. Esmée bore herself bravely enough at the police-station, where she could only furnish a vague and confused account; but when she reached her rooms, she gave way to a flood of tears. The watch and chain and the bracelet were cherished links with the past. They could never be replaced. They had belonged to the beloved mother who now lay, sleeping her last sleep, in a far-away country churchyard. And though Gladys Mellor nestled close to her and whispered broken words of sympathy, for a while she refused to be comforted. The loss of her purse, with all the money she possessed in the world, was forgotten. Her mind went back to the happy past before ruin and death had desolated her home; before the murder-cloud had cast its hideous shadow over the man she loved. One thought led on to others; the hard, fierce struggle for existence that had followed; failure following upon failure; the weary trappings to the theatrical agents; the insults of such men as Gilderoy; the wear and tear, the toil and moil of provincial stage-life—always on the road, out of one lodging into another, no rest, no repose, necessity, like a grim policeman, for ever crying "move on." Yet a light had brightened her life again. The man she loved was free and near to her. The murder stain had yet to be cleared away. The future was dark with doubt; yet there mingled with her tears a prayer of thankfulness for the present. Then her mind harked back again, and the tears flowed faster. Those priceless relics of the past could never be replaced.

She raised her head and hastily brushed away her tears as the servant entered to say that the person from the theatre wanted to know if he could have a word with her. Mary Ann's second impression of Cully Scott was even less favourable than the first.

Cully Scott entered the room awkwardly.

"Don't worrit, miss," he blurted out, "'ere's yer purse back!"

Esmée gave a little cry of astonishment. Gladys was standing open-eyed at the squat, ugly-faced man.

"Oh, how did you get it back?" she whispered.

"I took it from the party what took it from Miss Conyers—then speaking yer quickly to prevent Esmée from thanking him—" and look 'ere, miss, it ain't for the likes 'o me to advise the like 'o you, but keep clear of the Lane in future, and don't go about carryin' yer purse in yer 'and. Gals will do it, but it's temptin' of Providence!"

"It's so good of you"—Esmée's voice was low and unsteady—"I don't know how to thank you."

"Don't try, miss. I 'ope yer got away from the place with out no further bother?"

The tears rose to Esmé's eyes. "No; after you had gone, there was a dreadful crowd, and my watch and chain and bracelet were—were stolen." "What!" Cully Scott just managed to suppress an oath. "Sneaked, was they? And you valued them for more than what they'd fetch. What was they like, miss? I don't 'old out no 'opes, but maybe I might get 'em back for yer."

"But how could you do that?" asked Gladys, with all a child's eager curiosity.

Cully Scott scratched his head. He had a distinct sense of humour.

"It's like this 'ere, little missie," he said mysteriously, and winking to himself in spirit; "I've a partikler friend 'o mine what's very intimate with some 'o the very 'outest detectives of Scotland Yard."

"Oh, what have you done to your hand?" Gladys had suddenly caught sight of his left hand; the knuckles were badly cut.

"It came in contact with something 'ard, little missie. Maybe it was a brick wall, maybe it wasn't."

When Cully Scott left the room, he carried on a slip of paper the number of Esmé's watch, and in his head a description of the bracelet.

"And if," he muttered, as he passed down the stairs, "they ain't already in the meltin' pot, strike me blind! but with the 'elp 'o Lopsided Joe—what's very intimate with the 'tecs at Scotland Yard—I'll 'ave 'em back afore midnight!"

"Nelson, our new baggage man," said Gladys Mellor, in her old-fashioned manner, as she nestled close to Esmé and circled an arm round her neck, "is very ugly, isn't he? But, of course, looks are not everything in this world, are they? I think his heart is in the right place."

"I am sure of that," said Esmé, her voice quivering.

But the stage-child understood not the full meaning of the words. She did not know that Nelson, the new baggage man, was Cully Scott, alias the Smasher, who had escaped from Bleakmoor gaol with Reginald Stanley, the Dunnaton murderer—Esmé's Conyers did!

It was past ten o'clock when the servant hustled into the sitting-room in a state of suppressed indignation. Gladys Mellor had long since returned to the relative with whom she stayed when in London. Esmé sat alone, her face resting on her hands, staring dreamily into the fire.

"Please, miss," said Mary Ann, "that person from the theatre 'as been here again. He wouldn't come up to see you, but asked me to give you this with particular care, saying it was very important!"

She handed Esmé a small paper parcel, then flounced out of the room.

With trembling fingers Esmé untied the string. A cry of joy burst from her. Within lay her watch and chain and her bracelet. She pressed them to her lips. Then her eyes filled with tears of gratitude. The Smasher's ugly, rugged face rose up before her. Since he had entered her life he had brought her nothing but good. It was he who had contrived her meeting with Rex; who had given her confidence in the future. It lightened her heart to think that this strong, resourceful man would be near to the man she loved.

"God bless him!" she whispered.

"That's the beauty 'o knowin' the ropes," muttered the Smasher, as he made his way towards King's Cross. "I thought them gew-gaws 'ud find their way round to old Sheen's shop, and 'ed be glad to part with 'em fur a price. And Lopsided Joe's a pal I can trust as myself. Guess old Sheen thought 'im a mug, though, when he offered to swap that sixty-guinea gent's watch and chain for them gew-gaws—'cos 'e wanted 'em fur 'is best gal!"

The Smasher smiled grimly.

"Reckon I don't say nothink to my young toff 'ow I got 'em back. It might 'urt 'is feelin' if 'e knew I 'ad to pinch an old gent's watch and chain so as to manage it. But I'd made up my mind Sweetheart was goin' to get 'er own back."

He paused for a moment. "Bless 'er pretty face! I'm beginning to feel a sort 'o daddy to 'er!"

On his arrival at the lodgings he looked into the sitting-room. Stanley was not there.

"I told him not to sit up fur me, as I'd got a lot on hand and might be late. Maybe 'e's gone to bed."

He passed up to Stanley's bedroom. Receiving no answer to his knock, he peered in. The room was empty.

"I told 'im not to go out more than 'e could 'elp," he growled. "It's different with me—I knows a thing or two, 'e don't! Where's he gone?"

He returned to the sitting-room. When the cheap clock tinged out eleven, he began to show signs of restlessness.

"Why don't 'e come back?" he muttered, scratching his bullet head. "Wonder if 'e's gone round Bloomsbury-way, to do a bit 'o sweetheartin'?"

When the clock tinged out the half-hour, Cully Scott jerked on his peaked cap, and went out into the night. He could stand the suspense no longer.

CHAPTER XII. Shadowed.

Ten o'clock had seen Rex Stanley pacing the dingy little sitting-room with the short, restless step acquired in the prison cell. Solitude had induced reflection. There was nothing to divert his thoughts. He had tried to rehearse his part, but his mind kept breaking away. He found himself vainly grappling with the mystery of more than four years back, as he had vainly grappled with it a thousand times before.

Who had murdered Sir Ronald Dunnaton?

Again he marshalled before him all the facts of that fateful night. His mental vision conjured up the oak-panelled room, the open windows leading out on the lawn, the aristocratic old man, filled with pride of race, white with passion, telling him that he would cut him off without a penny if he refused to marry where he wished, if he persisted in his mad infatuation for a girl utterly beneath him in social status; he himself, quivering with passion also, answering back that all the disinheritance in the world should not deter him; that, if needs be, he would work with his hands for the girl he loved; then the passionate sweep of his hand that smashed a glass and cut his fingers. That was all! He had gone. Quarter of an hour later Sir Ronald Dunnaton was found murdered! What had happened in that brief quarter of an hour? Who was the individual who must have entered by those open windows? What was the motive?

This was the mystery, the solution of which could alone establish his innocence. It was like battering against a stone wall. The atmosphere of the dingy room seemed to be stifling him. A craving for unconfined movement, for fresh air, seized him.

A few moments later, regardless of Cully Scott's advice, he was hurrying rapidly through the lamp-lit streets as if he were trying to race away from his thoughts.

On and on, heedless of direction, forgetting time!

"Why the dickens don't you look out where you're going to, sir?"

The shock that had preceded the words brought Stanley back to the immediate present. He had cannoned into an elderly gentleman moving in the opposite direction. It was too dark to distinguish much more than a thin, bent figure, with an old-fashioned cloak and a wide-awake hat; but the man's sharp, rasping tones had, somehow, reminded Stanley of the voice assumed by Harley Garside when he was playing the part of Jake Brood, the villainous fence in *Fettered Lives*.

Before he had time to apologise, the old gentleman, his head bent forward, hurried past, muttering something under his breath about irresponsible star-gazers. Stanley stared after him. Besides the voice, there was another resemblance between the man and Harley Garside's impersonation—the peculiar, shambling gait.

"Garside," he thought, as he hurried on again, "might have modelled his performance on that old gentleman!"

The keen night air and the vigorous exercise were surely steadying his nerves; but he felt in no mood to return home. The realisation that he was free and in the heart of a great city, free to wander where he liked, produced a mental reaction.

The great heaven was above him, no longer a little slit of sky seen through iron bars. His blood started to throb with a sense of exhilaration. He threw back his head, and quickened his pace. He had taken no heed of his direction; but he presently emerged into Shaftesbury Avenue. The thoroughfare was still alive with humanity. It was good to be rubbing shoulders again with his fellow-men—free men, wearing the every-day clothes of civilisation. So far he had only left his rooms to go to the theatre and return, and on one memorable evening, to escort Esmé to her lodgings. Precautions were forgotten in the joyous exhilaration of mingling with life. He was on familiar ground now. Yonder was a club of which he had been a member. His name had long since been erased from the books. There stood the theatre in which, years back, sitting in the stalls, he had wondered vaguely what were the sensations of those whose lot it was to mimic tears and laughter, joy and sorrow, and the many moods of human passion.

A glimpse of a clock recalled him to the present. If Cully Scott returned and found him out, he would be anxious. He had been moving towards Piccadilly Circus. He turned back up the Avenue.

It would have made Cully Scott grind his teeth could he have seen his young "toff" pass into the brilliant glare thrown by the overhead lamps of a gorgeous gin-palace. Outside, leaning against the wall, was the inevitable little line of loafers and out-at-elbow wrecks.

One man was of the type typical! His battered hat was jammed down over his eyes; his chin resting on his chest; his hands thrust deep into his ragged pockets. His face was depravity itself. He glared sullenly at the passers-by as though he had a grudge against mankind.

He scowled at Stanley from under the broken brim of his hat. Then, suddenly, his whole expression changed, and he crashed under an oath! He suffered him to pass on some little way ahead; then slouched after him.

"It's 'im," he muttered hoarsely under his breath; "it's 'im, right enough, I should know 'im again amongst a thousand!"

(To be continued.)

NOTE TO READERS.—This story began a fortnight ago. Each back number may be obtained of any newsagent for one penny, or from this Office on receipt of two penny stamps.

WHEN YOU TURN OVER.

HAVE you ever awakened with a start in the middle of the night to find that you have turned over and that your heart is beating rather more rapidly than circumstances warrant? If not, you can no doubt recall occasions when you have awakened suddenly without apparent cause. Is there anything in this? "Yes," says a French physician, and he gives the following explanation.

"It is a fact generally known that the vitality of the body decreases during sleep; our hearts beat more slowly and our system rests, as it were. This decrease goes on till we reach a very low point, usually between two and four o'clock in the morning; the time between those hours is a very dangerous one for people who are ill, and it is also dangerous for all of us, as is shown by the fact that Nature takes it upon herself to shake us up a bit. About three o'clock we are impelled to stretch our limbs, take a deep breath and turn over; this movement stirs up the heart, which is then beating feebly, and makes it work more vigorously. So we come back to life from the brink of death."

A FRIEND says he has a dear, loving little wife, who is an excellent housekeeper. On her birthday she moved her low chair close to his side. He was reading. She placed her dear little hand lovingly on his arm, and moved it softly towards his coat collar. He felt nice all over. He certainly expected a kiss.

"Hubbie," said she.

"What, my dear?"

"I was just thinking—"

"Were you, my love?"

"I was just thinking how nicely this suit of clothes you have on would work into a rag carpet!"

RED LETTER DAYS

A Chronicle of Interesting Events that have Happened this Week.

Half-a-crown each will be paid for paragraphs suitable for this column. Attempts must arrive at least three weeks ahead of the dates dealt with. Mark your envelopes "Red Letter."

16th August, 1819.—On this day occurred the Manchester or Peterloo Massacre. A vast meeting of at least 50,000 met in St. Peter's Field, Manchester, to advocate the giving of political power to the masses and to hear an address from a man named Hunt on universal suffrage. The magistrates ordered the arrest of Hunt in the midst of the vast crowd of his supporters. A party of mounted yeomanry, attempting to effect his capture, was soon broken up, and the isolated soldiers were subjected to jeers and insults. The magistrates then sent Hussars to support the yeomanry. The Hussars charged, and the weight of the disciplined soldiery drove the crowd into a muddled mass of shrieking fugitives, pressed together by their efforts to escape. When at last the ground was cleared many of the victims were piled up on one another. Five or six deaths were the result and the number of wounded was considerable.

17th August, 1866.—At half past three o'clock in the afternoon of the above date the announcement was made that Overend and Gurney's bank had failed. At the time of their suspension the company's engagements amounted to £19,000,000. The terrible news produced the greatest panic that ever struck this country, and the Government was compelled to authorise the Bank of England to issue notes beyond the legal limit. This crash ruined English credit on the Continent for many months. The aggregate loss to the shareholders was over three millions sterling.

18th August, 1875.—A serious collision took place between H.M. Yacht, *Alberta*, with Queen Victoria on board, and Mr. Heywood's yacht, *Mistletoe*. The latter was sunk, and Miss Annie Peel and two others were drowned. After a lengthened inquest, Captain Welch, of the *Alberta*, was reprimanded, and £3,000 were paid as compensation to Mr. Heywood and others. In consequence of the above, a letter was written, on behalf of the Queen, to the Marquis of Exeter, Commodore of the Victoria Yacht Club, desiring yachts not to be brought too near the Royal yacht "whether from loyalty or curiosity."

19th August, 1703.—A grand service was held in St. Paul's Cathedral to return thanks for the victory of Oudenarde. Queen Anne went in state to this service, and, as Mistress of the Robes, Sarah, Duchess of Marlborough, had laid out the jewels for the Queen to wear. The Duchess's power was already on the wane, and as the Royal party passed up Ludgate Hill, she noticed the Queen was not wearing the jewels. A violent quarrel ensued, and the warfare of words was kept up even after Queen Anne had taken her seat in the cathedral. Finally the Duchess shouted to the Queen, "Hold your tongue." "Was there ever such another scene?" writes a commentator of the time, "a queen and a subject quarrelling like two fishwives, and the Queen ordered by her subject to hold her tongue."

20th August, 1743.—It may seem strange that the first exploit of the Black Watch to be recorded in history was a mutiny, but such is the case. On this date, four years after the formation as a regiment, the men were marched into England under orders for Flanders. An idea prevailing that they were to be sent to the West Indies, then detested for the bad climate, one hundred of the men deserted, and set off for Scotland in a body. Overtaken, they entrenched themselves, and for some time refused to surrender, but finally they gave in. The three ringleaders were shot, and the remainder were drafted into other regiments. This did not prevent the rest of the Black Watch from winning great credit during the Flanders campaign, especially at Fontenoy, where they were ordered, "even by the Duke of Cumberland in person, they having had the honour to be first in the front ranks and last in the rear on that memorable day."

21st August, 1763.—An execution stopped by the Day of Judgment! If some of the extreme Transatlantic journals had to report an occurrence such as described in a quaint letter bearing the above date, that is assuredly how they would head it. The writer tells how, two days before, the sun became overcast just after midday, and the gloom deepened till it was as dark as night. Then came torrents of rain, wind, thunder and lightning to still further terrify the inhabitants of London. A great fear fell upon all; there was a wild panic and a firm belief that the Last Day had arrived. A crowd had assembled on Kensington Common to witness an execution, but instead of quietly watching, they cried shame on the sheriff for executing a man when the Day of Judgment was close at hand. As he persisted in his preparations, they interfered and stopped the proceedings, declaring that the culprit might as well wait a few minutes, when the grand summons would come for all. The sheriff was more intelligent than the mob, and sent for a force of soldiers, with whose assistance the execution was carried out.

22nd August, 1851.—The date of the discovery of the Goliath of gold nuggets, the largest that the world has ever seen. James Dawson and Richard Oates had been working a claim for months at Donnelly, Victoria, and had had a long run of ill luck; they were on their beam ends and had reluctantly decided to leave Donnelly, broken in spirit and ruined. It was on the evening before the day arranged for their departure, the men were working in a forlorn sort of manner, when Dawson struck the nugget. The men could not realise their luck; the block of gold was so big for a nugget! It weighed 2,316 ounces when cleaned of foreign matter, and it was worth £0,535.

You must read beautiful Hazel Harlow's Adventures in SHORT STORIES.

30,000 ENTRIES FOR ONE RACE.

When Big Pigeon Meets are held, a Dozen Trains are sometimes chartered to carry the birds to the Race Town.

One hundred and eighty pounds seems an enormous sum to offer for two pigeons. This offer, which will surprise most people, was made a short time ago, and was refused, the owner of the birds requiring a hundred pounds each for them. Such high-priced birds are not ordinary pigeons, they are blue-blooded homing pigeons. They are profitable to those who take them up as a hobby, as they are improving yearly by crossing and training, and a good sum of money may be made by any man or woman who takes sufficient interest in breeding them.

Homing pigeons are the poor man's racers, any man can have a good stud for a small outlay, big prices being confined to the highest class of pigeons. The average man will get as much pleasure out of his loft as the wealthy man will out of his stables. Pigeon flying is fashionable as well as inexpensive; the King and the Duke of Cornwall are enthusiastic flyers. The King not only has won the Derby, he has also won the Grand National Pigeon Race of 500 odd miles; he is proud of his fine birds. The sport is increasing by leaps and bounds in Britain, in fact no sport has ever made such astounding progress as pigeon flying has during the last year or two.

Thirty thousand pigeons have taken part in a single race flown by the united Lancashire federations. The conveyance of these birds to Winchester requires no fewer than twelve separate railway trains, each of great length. The Yorkshire federation often liberates fifteen to sixteen van loads of pigeons at a single "toss."

HOW THE BIRD FINDS ITS WAY.

The Jockey Club of the pigeon world is the Homing Union; in fact, pigeon racing has a great resemblance to horse racing, with one important exception—the racing is done for the love of the sport. There are no great stakes, and practically there is no gambling. Mr. Rhodes, of Wakefield, the veteran conveyer of the largest pigeon federation in these isles, tells P.W. that he has never seen a bet of ten shillings made upon a race in his life.

The pigeon-flying record was made by a bird which covered a distance of forty-two miles at an average rate of 2,100 yards a minute. This speed is nearly one mile and a fifth a minute. Homing pigeons travel great distances at the rate of an express train. What is known as the Big Race is one run from Bordeaux, the distance being over 600 miles, and varying, of course, according to where the pigeon's home is. A very famous pigeon, Excelsior, did its 600 miles when only nine months old.

How does a homer find its way? This is a very puzzling question, and there are different opinions regarding it. Mr. Rhodes, whose opinion should bear great weight, does not believe it is due to any extraordinary instinct. He says the birds have a panorama of the country in their eyes. They have wonderful sight, and circle around until they see a familiar landmark; then they fly off home in a direct line. A bird will be trained by being "tossed" five miles from home; when high up in the air it can see home after it has circled around a little.

Next it is taken ten miles away; it flies in a great circle until it can see a portion of the first five mile fly, when it feels at home. So it is trained up to distances of hundreds of miles.

This is how a race is managed: Every pigeon while still a squaker has a numbered ring placed over its leg; a register of these numbers is kept, so that the home and owner of each bird is known. First of all the pigeon is trained over the course about to be raced.

EACH PIGEON IS MARKED.

Just before the race each pigeon is marked with an additional number known only to the racing authorities. The birds are taken to the starting place in baskets under the charge of the conveyer and his assistant; and the baskets are arranged so that thousands of birds can be set at liberty in less than a minute. The exact time when the birds are tossed is telegraphed to the central authorities.

As each bird enters the home-loft its owner dispatches a telegram to the headquarters announcing the arrival and giving the race number. Special clocks are used sometimes to show the time of arrival; these are actuated by the bird as it alights. The bird which attains the highest average velocity—that is, which is the swiftest—wins.

Frauds, of course, take place sometimes. A special time allowance is made for owners to run to the nearest telegraph office. In Cumberland one sharper claimed the full "running-allowance," but had men stationed on the hill-tops to whom he signalled his birds' arrival and so got the news to the telegraph office much sooner than he would have done had he run all the way. His birds always won; but he was detected and expelled from pigeondom.

In Belgium the race number is inclosed in a rubber

band, which is put on the bird's leg. One swindler conceived a very ingenious plan, by which his bird always won. When the turn came for his bird to have the rubber band put on, he held the pigeon, but doubled back its leg and substituted a dead leg, which he retained after the process. By this smart trick he obtained possession of the secret number. This he telegraphed to head-quarters when he thought proper. His birds won time after time until he was found out, and the secret of his phenomenal success detected.

Pigeons are turned to many practical uses nowadays. Australia has a pigeon post between an island and the mainland. The birds are trained in the Continental armies for war duty as carriers; each pigeon has to fly twice a day for one and a half to two hours at a time. The exact method in which they are trained and the duties for which they are required are kept secret. Sometimes they are flown from Britain, but the Continental authorities take extraordinary pains to superintend the flying of British pigeons from their countries.

Belgium possesses the finest racers in the world, and pigeon flying is the national sport. The Belgian King gives an annual prize of 1,000 francs. There are other bigger stakes and large pools in addition, so that pigeon racing is as profitable to the owner of a winner as horse racing is here.

The result is that the best birds are very valuable, and the prices are so great that the majority of our own pigeon fanciers cannot afford to purchase good Belgian birds; £40 or £50 is a common price for a high-class bird. Good British young birds can be obtained from 10s. to £1 a pair.

Homing pigeon keeping undoubtedly is the coming hobby. With care it is a profitable hobby, as good "squakers" find a ready market. It is a pleasant hobby, and it is a kingly hobby, too. Some of the most successful breeders of pigeons are women.

When a young woman I was one of a family party sojourning at a French watering-place, says a correspondent, where the English tourist was comparatively a curiosity. The solitary jug provided for the ablutions of two young ladies was of so minute a size that we were obliged to keep sending our English maid to refill it at the pump. One day we overheard our landlady say to some neighbours:

"Oh, my dear friends, you cannot imagine what these English are like! The quantity of water which it takes to get those creatures clean every morning is something appalling."

A HA'PENNY HISTORY OF THE WORLD.

WITH the appearance of the NORTH MAIL on Wednesday, August 14th, in the Northern and North-Eastern districts of England, an epoch in the history of provincial journalism has occurred, and its influence will be felt throughout the whole of the Northern and North-Eastern districts. Until the fourteenth of this month country readers were placed at a disadvantage so far as Foreign and Colonial News was concerned. But with the advent of the

NORTH MAIL

all has been changed. And here is why: the NORTH MAIL has its own correspondents in every centre of importance throughout the United Kingdom. They will give you the local and home news. The NORTH MAIL has the brightest of writers among its sub-editors. They will give you this news in its most attractive form. The NORTH MAIL is worked in conjunction with the LONDON DAILY EXPRESS. Private wires have been laid at great expense between the offices of these two papers, so every evening from six till two the next morning, news gathered from all the world over by the DAILY EXPRESS CORRESPONDENTS is flashed to Newcastle for the benefit of NORTH MAIL readers.

A Giant Combine.

A Giant Combine.

A Giant Combine.

A Giant Combine.

A Giant Combine.

The NORTH MAIL, therefore, has its correspondents in every important city of the world. No other provincial paper in the Kingdom has that, and every copy of the NORTH MAIL is not only a local newspaper but is also a daily history of the world. All for One Halfpenny. Every form of sport is fully reported, and shipping and commerce are made special features, and fashions and other matters of interest to women are dealt with in the NORTH MAIL by the most eminent authorities. Thus the resources of the LONDON DAILY EXPRESS added to those of the NORTH MAIL go to form a daily newspaper such as has never before appeared in the province. All readers of P.W. who live between Berwick and York and Leeds, between Carlisle and Hull, in fact, anywhere in the counties of Northumberland, Cumberland, Durham, or the North and East Riding of York, should order their newsagents to supply them with a copy.

BUY IT NOW AND SEE.

Things the Post Office Won't Let You Do.

You may Not Oblige a Friend by Delivering a Letter for him, nor may you Draw up your Carriage in Front of a Post Office.

An authority at headquarters said to P.W. a few days ago:

"The King is the head of the Post Office, but, really, this is only in the sense royal as befits the imperial prerogative."

"The practical head and chief appointed by Government is the Postmaster-General. In him are invested many exclusive privileges which even the King himself cannot claim as being within his own rights."

"The Postmaster-General, that is to say, the Post Office, speaking in a generic sense, has the exclusive privilege of conveying from one place to another all letters passing from one subject to another within the King's dominions. This means receiving, collecting, sending, dispatching, and delivering such communications."

"Do this yourself and you cheat the Revenue, just as the receiver of an account contravenes the law if he fail to affix a penny stamp to a bill of £2 and upwards."

"We can confiscate notices on circulars of merchants and others, addressed to sundry persons and sent out to be delivered by a third person, for this is the work of the Post Office."

"All business notices, business circulars, and letters, must be posted in the ordinary way for the Post Office to deliver."

"That is the law where such communications are addressed to individuals, whether by name and address, or simply the name, or only the address."

"Unaddressed letters or circulars are beyond our reach perhaps, and a person may deliver these from door to door—but on this particular point the law is uncertain. It might be proved in a test case that we had the power to commandeer unaddressed, as well as addressed, letters and notices, and that the right of distributing them from door to door was vested in the Postmaster-General."

"There are certain concessions made by the Acts of Parliament relative to letters of private persons."

"You may, for instance, send a letter by special messenger to a friend, providing the contents refer to your or to his private affairs, but up till within a short time ago, when the rule was relaxed in the favour of a certain messenger service company, it was illegal to do this if the contents of such letter referred to business."

"The Postmaster-General may issue a license to an authorised firm for delivering letters and other communications that ought, by right, to be delivered by the Post Office. This has been done within recent times."

"You may send a letter to a friend abroad through the agency of a third friend, who is going out to the same place, providing that your letter is not taken out on board a mail steamer carrying the ordinary mails. It must be a private vessel."

"And it is also legal for a person to send a letter, properly addressed, to another person so long as the contents refer to goods delivered with the letter."

"I am quoting examples representing what is the strict letter of the law. We will say that a railway clerk employed at the head offices of his company is in love with the daughter of a stationmaster employed down the line; strictly speaking, it would be improper for him to send her a letter by the guard of a train calling at the station; it ought to be posted."

"The law is explicit on a point like this, for it is stated that common known carriers, their servants or agents, may not receive or deliver a letter, though they receive no hire or reward for the same, except a letter concerning goods in their carts or waggons."

"Yet the Post Office presumably would hesitate to take action were the act discovered, but action would be taken in a case where a merchant delivered great bundles of addressed circulars or letters."

"It is quite a common impression that there are no restrictions on one's letters, and that posting them is a mere matter of form; but that idea is wrong. The only exceptions are those which I have named."

"The King's State letters are not stamped, but his Majesty's private letters are, so are those of the Crown ministers and Government officials."

"Since the recent institution of a secular or lay service for the delivery of letters, which has been duly licensed by the Post Office, the public now has the choice of two mediums, and it may legally select either the Post Office or the messenger service. But, of course, the exclusive right is vested in the Postmaster General."

"Wherever exists a toll-gate where a toll is demanded the Post Office mails are, by law, exempted from payment."

"Neither is it lawful for a cart, carriage, or cab to draw up in front of a post office. The only vehicle that has the right to do so is the Post Office mail van."

"An employé in a place of business should not get over-excited if letters addressed to him by friends or others are opened by his employer. Few employers would do such a thing, yet it is their right to do so if they felt so inclined."

We can't find words to describe the merits of SHORT STORIES.

TO IDENTIFY HER PHOTO.

SHE imagined his room with her photograph smiling down at him from over the mantel, while another of her photos looked demurely at him from a leather case on the dressing-table.

She could see him often standing in front of her mirrored likeness, and making vows of constancy and fidelity. She knew he would rather part with anything he had than those likenesses. But they had quarrelled, and she felt she must ask him to return her photographs and she wrote to him accordingly.

When she received his reply she nearly fainted. Here is what the wretch wrote:

"Dear Mabel: I would like awfully much to return your photos, but honestly you girls all dress and pose so much alike for the camera that I can't tell any two of you apart. If you like I will send you over three or four hundred photos that I have of miscellaneous girls, and you can pick yours out. Hoping this will be satisfactory, I am sincerely, etc., etc."

"It is no good arguing with a policeman," says a youthful wit, "for you never get much change out of a copper."

RICH UNCLE: "You might as well stop mooning about Miss Beauty. She hasn't been in love with you after all. She's been after the money she thought you would inherit from me."

Nephew: "Impossible! Why do you think so?"
Rich Uncle: "I have proposed to her myself, and been accepted!"

THE MAN OF THE HOUSE: "What's the matter; did you pull the bell?"

Visitor: "Sorry to disturb yer, friend, but my pal forgot to bring along de jimmy an' keys, and we couldn't get in widout wakin' yer."

"I RECEIVED a lot of rejected manuscripts to-day," said Titmarsh to a friend.

"Did you? I had no idea you had any ambition to shine as an author."

"Not exactly that. You see, my sweetheart and I quarrelled, and she returned all my letters."

Result of the "Cricket" Competition.

THE solid silver pencil-case has been won in this competition by Mr. F. E. Ashford, 17 Lucas Terrace, Plymouth.

A pencil-case has been sent to each of the following:

A. V. Hardwick, "Arbath," Newell Road, N.; H. N. Widdows, c.o. Mrs. F. Hardwick, 19 Bathin Street, Hillhead, Glasgow; F. E. Pippin, c.o. Wansborough and Co., Broad Street, Bristol; M. Johnston, 27 Nelson Street, Edinburgh; W. C. Ormiston, 114 Rose Street, Edinburgh; J. C. Morgan, 27 Napier Avenue, Southend-on-Sea; F. Hardy, 173 Folehill Road, Coventry; A. Bott, The Elms, Bedford Gardens, Ilford; E. Moore, 285 Borough Road, Birkhead; J. Reid, 11 Dudgeon Street, Dundee; J. R. Graves, 23 Elm Road, Tramore, Birkhead; E. A. Eynon, Weston House, Moulton, Northampton; W. L. Greenwood, 27 Moss Lane East, Manchester; J. F. Holmes, Alredale View, 230 Otley Road, Bradford; Miss H. Teague, 15 Side, away Street, Old Hill, Staffs.; E. Coulson, 330 Batham High Road, Upper Toxteth, S.W.; F. Dunton, Cliff Cottage, Teahidy Road, Cambrone, Cornwall; G. T. Sampson, 68 Brunswick Avenue, Hull; W. Cave, 154 Devonshire Road, Forest Hill; Rev. W. Ellison, 45 Moleworth Street, Dublin; J. Mack, 143 Alexandra Road, N. W.; A. Martin, 31 Fyn Street, Devonport; G. Parker, 40 Carlton Street, Newcastle-on-Tyne; C. Sheldon, 14 Marlboro' Crescent, Norfolk Street, Hull; F. Burns, 68 Chief Street, Belfast.

WHAT MR. GATES SAW.

"I SAW in the paper this morning," began Mr. Gates at the breakfast table, "that—"

"There's too much milk in my oatmeal," cried the youngest member of the Gates family.

"I see in this morning's paper," began the head of the house again, "that the—"

"King's house is up for sale again, ma," remarked the eldest daughter. "I noticed the bill on the fence when I looked out of my window this morning. I don't believe Mr. King can afford to go for any holidays this year if that house isn't sold. What did you start to say, pa?"

"I see in this morning's paper that the British—"

"Must be in an awful hurry this morning, Willie," said the second daughter, Beattie, to her small brother.

"You're stuffing like a big pig. Stop making such a noise with your lips."

"Children, I'm ashamed of you," said Mrs. Gates, reprovingly. "What is it you see in the paper this morning, Henry?"

"Type," said Mr. Gates savagely. "Pass the salt."

A SURE sign that the door bell is going to ring—when you are the only one in the house and are in the bath.

BEGGAR WOMAN: "My children are starving. Can you not give me something for charity's sake?"

Old Grindstone: "No. I pay taxes to help to light the streets so that you can see to beg. That's all I can afford for charity."

CLEANSE THE SYSTEM OF ALL IMPURITIES FREE.

THE BENEFIT OF THE GENUINE.

Read how the genuine KUTNOW'S POWDER restores a SLUGGISH LIVER.

The liver is the mainspring of the system. When it's healthy it is the great purifying organ of the body. When it isn't, it is like a poisoned cesspool, contaminating the entire physical organism. The liver is the largest gland in the body, and has lots to do. It both secretes and excretes. It is the great give-and-take gland of the system. A healthy liver secretes from two to three pounds of bile daily. Bile is sent from the liver into the blood to gather up all the impurities. In due time it returns laden with this refuse matter, which the liver secretes and expels from the system. When the liver refuses to take back the bile from the blood, BILIOUSNESS is the inevitable result. BILIOUSNESS is bile out of place. The bile can't go wrong when the liver does its duty. Since the liver is the sieve of the system, it must be kept clean in order to do its duty. There's a right way and a wrong way to keep the liver clean and healthy. Some folks believe in punishing the poor stomach and bowels with powerful purgatives when the liver lags. This is a wrong idea; the right way is the rational way. KUTNOW'S POWDER is a rational remedy for BILIOUSNESS, because it restores natural action to the liver. It cleanses, cools, and strengthens the liver and bowels. It expels all poisonous deposits, and cleanses the system of all impurities.

THE DANGER OF IMITATIONS.

We suppose you prefer facts to fiction? Facts are stubborn! We likewise conclude you prefer a genuine article to the imitation! Therefore in purchasing Kutnow's Powder beware of imitations. Unscrupulous dealers are stocking cheap and worthless imitations of Kutnow's Powder for the sake of the extra profit they yield. None of these worthless preparations are the slightest use, beyond that of a mere purge, and their drastic character might produce collapse in a delicate patient. They are condemned in the medical profession as cheap and nasty! To SECURE THE GENUINE KUTNOW'S POWDER, ask for Kutnow, and if you are told it is not in stock, but a substitute, so called "just as good" is offered, leave the shop and beware of entrusting a prescription to such a house, pass your order on to a respectable chemist who respects the truth. THERE IS NOTHING IN THE WHOLE WORLD TO EQUAL KUTNOW'S POWDER, nothing stands the test of medical experience like Kutnow's Powder, it has been endorsed by all the leading specialists and physicians, and prescribed to Members of the Royal Family. REJECT ALL SUGGESTED SUBSTITUTES, INSIST ON KUTNOW, AND SEE IT IS KUTNOW.

THE REPORT OF AN EMINENT PHYSICIAN.

Prof. I. N. LOVE, M.D., Professor of Clinical Medical Diseases of Children and Hygiene, Marion-Sims College of Medicine and College of Physicians and Surgeons, writing on April 3, 1901, says:

The great surgeon Prof. Lawson Tait, M.D., himself a sufferer, a gouty diathesis, was not only one of the world's greatest surgeons, but an able and all-round physician, a skilful therapist. For years he found KUTNOW'S POWDER of great value to him personally and in his practice, and this remedy is one of the few he conspicuously endorsed over his own signature. He realized, as all careful, observing practitioners do, that it is necessary to cleanse the system frequently, to remove debris left by undigested food, hasten the elimination of uric acid, to properly guard against serious disease.

KUTNOW'S POWDER stimulates the activities of the bowels and kidneys. A dessertspoonful in a tumbler of water immediately on arising in the morning cleans out the bowels, dilutes the urine, and flushes out the kidneys in a most satisfactory way.

Thorough elimination is salvation, and there is no better eliminator than KUTNOW'S POWDER.

(Signed) I. N. LOVE, M.D.

NOTICE.—After trial and approval, any further supplies of Kutnow's Powder may be obtained at any Chemist's or Medicine Vendors at 2s per capsule bottle, or direct, post paid, from Kutnow's London office for 3s, anywhere within the United Kingdom. See that the Signature, S. KUTNOW & CO., Ltd., and the Trade Mark, "HIRSCHEN-SPRUNG" (or DEER LEAP), are on the Label and Carton, and also the name, Kutnow's Powder, in raised letters blown into the glass on the back of the bottle, without which none are genuine.

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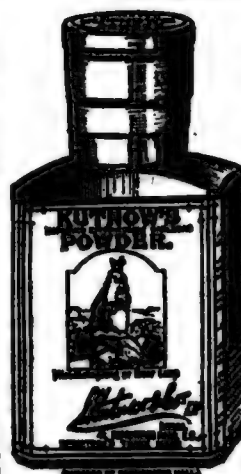
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A Lovely BOMBON, Boat-shaped, made of
Chocolate and Hazel Nut, each being wrapped in
silver paper—with name on.

Iced Oxo
and Soda
for hot days.

Order from Grocer, Stores, or
Chemist.



HOME NOTES PAGE

ISOBEL will be glad to answer questions of general interest upon household matters so far as space permits. A pretty pencil-case will be given to each reader whose inquiry is dealt with on this page. Envelopes should be marked HOME NOTES.

Another Cure for Warts. A correspondent says that she has found the following plan for treating warts very successful, and it is less trying to use than many things. Procure a small bottle of oil of cinnamon and every day touch the wart with it till it disappears. (Thanks to B. OWEN.)

Rhubarb Fool. Take some pink stewed rhubarb and pass it through a sieve till you have a pint or a pint and a half. Flavour it with a little lemon peel, and sweeten to taste. Beat up a gill of cream and then stir with the rhubarb pulp. Colour it prettily with cochineal, and set in a china bowl, or glass dish. Hand Savoy biscuits with this dish.

Kidneys and Tomatoes. Cut two sheep's kidneys in slices quarter inch thick, fry two rashers of fat bacon, and then the slices of kidney in the fat. When slightly cooked add two sliced tomatoes, sprinkle all with salt and cayenne pepper, and do not over cook the kidneys. Place on a hot dish and pour a little gravy round.

To Preserve Green Peas. To every quart of shelled peas allow half pint of salt. Mix thoroughly together and leave in a dish all night. Next day fill bottles with the salt and peas, cork, wax, and keep on their sides. When these are required for use they should be steeped over night in cold water and thoroughly washed before being cooked in the usual way. (Reply to BURWAGE.)

To Clean White Straw Hats. Brush very thoroughly with clean cold water to remove dust, and allow to dry. Dissolve a teaspoonful of oxalic acid in a quart of boiling water. Dip the hat into this. Dry, and then stiffen with white of egg or a clean, transparent size. If necessary, press the brim, laying it on the edge of the table, with a hot iron on the wrong side. (Reply to BARNY.)

To Renovate Old Tea Trays. First wash the tray thoroughly with soap and water and a little rotten-stone. Then dry it with a cloth and stand near the fire. Next procure some good copal varnish, mix it with some bronze powder, and apply with a brush to the denuded parts. Then place the tray in an oven, at a heat of 212 degrees to 300 degrees, until the varnish is quite dry. Two coats should make it equal to new. (Reply to GARDNER.)

To Bone Herrings. Wash and wipe the herrings, cut off the heads and fins, clear out the entrails, scrape off the black skin, and be sure to remove the silver line. Place each herring on the board and proceed to bone it; press all along it to loosen the backbone, slit it down, and remove the bone from the head downwards. Remove any other small bone that you notice, then smooth the flesh with a knife dipped in cold water. (Reply to W. SEVEN.)

Cleaning Mackintosh Cloaks. Dip the garment first in cold water; then, with a scrubbing brush and yellow soap, proceed to scrub it all over, having spread it flat on a deal table. When the dirt is removed, dip the cloak in repeated waters to get rid of the suds, but do not wring it. Hang up in the air to dry, or in an airy room, but do not put near a fire. Paint may be removed by turpentine, but common soap and plenty of scrubbing will do the rest. (Reply to FLORIS.)

To Bottle Fruits. Fill large-mouthed bottles with fruit nearly to neck, then pour into the top cold water. Tie bladders tightly over. Have a small, clear fire. Put hay at the bottom and sides of a large fish kettle, and fill the kettle with water after placing in the bottles. Then let it simmer very, very gently till it boils, which must take a long time. Do not let the fruit burst, and be very careful to let the bottles stay in the fish kettle till all are perfectly cold, and the water as well. If the bottles are removed before, they are apt to burst. Be careful to cook the bottled fruits well, and for plums and gooseberries turn the bottles end upwards and corks down, so that the juice will keep the air from the fruit. (Reply to ALICE.)

Paint Stains on Glass may be removed by rubbing with vinegar; if one application is not successful, a second will take away the stain. (Reply to CHRYSLITE.)

To Stop the Small Hole in your Jug the following method is worth a trial: Make a paste of powdered gum tragacanth and glycerine, and set it in the hole. Let this dry for two or three weeks before using. One or two applications of the paste may be necessary. (Reply to PERPLEXED.)

Excellent Gruel for Invalids can be made as follows: Mix a tablespoonful of medium Scotch oatmeal with two tablespoonfuls of cold water, then pour on one of boiling water gradually while stirring. Set all in a small stew-pan, bring to the boil and let it simmer for three-quarters of an hour or till it is a smooth jelly. Strain into a basin, sweeten and flavour to taste. (Reply to PERTH.)

To Remove Freckles. Take one ounce of lemon-juice, quarter of a drachm of borax (powdered), and half a drachm of sugar. Mix thoroughly, and let it stand in a bottle for three days. It will then be fit for use, and should be rubbed on the face and hands occasionally. (Reply to B. P.)

To Whiten Kitchen Table. Wash it in cold or nearly cold water and scour with this mixture: Half a pound of sand, half a pound of soft soap, quarter of a pound of lime; put this on to the scrubbing brush and wash the way of the grain, not across it. N.B.—To have board white, cold or tepid water is necessary for scrubbing. (Reply to MAGGIE TULLIVER.)

Mock Turtle Soup from sheep's head, liver, and lights. Cut the liver and lights into pieces, and stew them in four quarts of water, with two onions, two carrots, peppercorns, salt, a bouquet garni, and half a pound of well-washed pearl barley. Stew all till nearly tender, then put in the head, which must have been properly cleaned and prepared for boiling, and let it simmer till quite tender; then take it out and strain everything from the liquor, which must be left in a basin till quite cold. Take off the fat, return the soup to the sauce-pan, thicken it with flour so that it coats a spoon, colour with a little browning, and add flavouring of ketchup and sherry to taste. Put some of the tongue and meat cut into neat pieces into it, and add some small forcemeat or egg balls; boil up and serve very hot. This soup requires careful skimming during the time the meat and head are first being stewed in it. (Reply to W. R.)

How to Glaze Collars and Cuffs. Make cold starch in the usual way, and wring the articles through it twice. Then dissolve two teaspoonfuls of borax in hot water, let it cool; wring the cuffs and collars through it twice. Wrap them in a clean towel and mangle thoroughly. Wait for a little while before ironing the goods. Iron on the wrong side first, then on the right, pressing very evenly and firmly so as to produce a gloss. A polishing iron is best for this process, but if you do not possess one, you will be able, with experience, to polish with an ordinary flat iron. For those who prefer boiled starch, here is a good recipe. Place four tablespoonfuls in a warm basin, make it into a smooth paste with warm water, add a piece of spermaceti the size of a pea, five drops of turpentine, and about an inch off a composite candle; gradually pour on boiling water; stir thoroughly till the starch becomes transparent and thick. Boiled starch should be used whilst still hot, the goods rubbed immediately and hung up to day, then damped down and set on one side till next day. (Reply to E. J.)

Pickled Walnuts. Prepare a pickle of vinegar and spices, etc., using two ounces of black peppercorns, one ounce of allspice, one ounce of bruised ginger, and two shallots to every quart of vinegar. Boil the whole for ten minutes. Choose the walnuts when young and not woody (the middle of July is the best time), rub them with a cloth, prick each with a fork or pin, and put in a strong brine of salt and water (proportion, one pound of salt to every quart of water). The brine must be cold when the walnuts are put in. Keep them in brine for eight days, changing the brine every alternate day. Drain the walnuts after the eighth day. Expose them to the sun for two or three days until they become perfectly black. Put them into jars, pour over sufficient of the prepared vinegar (hot) to well cover them, tie down with bladder or parchment, and keep in a dry place for three or four weeks. They will then be ready for use. (Reply to A. W. Y.)

Isobel

WOOD WITHOUT WORDS.

Silent Methods of "Popping the Question."

A CURIOUS custom of dumb wooing prevails in Hungary, especially among the Nomads, or gipsies. Cakes are used as love-letters. A corn is baked into the cake, which, at the first opportunity, is sung to the favoured object. The retention of this is looked upon as a virtual "acceptance"; its forcible return, an intimation that the "attentions" are undesired.

Dumb declarations of a pugnacious character are still common among semi-savage tribes and peoples. In the Arabian desert, round about Sinai, the lover tries to seize the girl whilst she is pasturing her father's flocks. She pelts him with mud, sticks, stones and will be held in life-long repute if she succeeds in wounding him. Once driven into her father's tent, the lover's object is attained, and the betrothal is proclaimed.

The Eskimo smitten one goes one better, inasmuch as he marches openly, and without any beating about the bush, to his loved one's abode; seizes her by her long, strong hair, or her fur garments, and drags her to his lair of ice, or tent of skin.

Words are not wasted by the Japanese Romeo. Giving her a soft-eyed, languishing look, expressive of all his heart-love for her, he throws a bunch of pale plum-flower buds into her litter, as she enters it to be carried to a friend's wedding. She tosses the blossoms lightly out—the suitor is rejected; she fastens them in her girdle—the suitor is acceptable to her. Again, a Japanese youth in love will creep, in the small hours, to his Juliet's home, and fasten to the door-lintel a spray of the same flower. If, at dawn, it is taken in, or sprinkled, he knows that the maid is his; if it is left to die or to fall, he is rejected.

In Spain the young man looks amorous, but never speaks, until after acceptance by his lady-love. The girl neither speaks, nor looks, but—she sees. Later, in the cool of the evening, the gentleman raps at her father's door and craves a gourd of water. It is, of course, given him. Then comes the crisis.

If he is not offered a chair within the porch, or a seat in the garden, he bows, and walks away—a rejected man; if, on the other hand, the coveted civility is extended to him, he remains, a practically engaged individual.

The Yao Midos, one of the many Burmese-Tartar peoples, woo their wives absolutely without words, but to the sound of music. On the first day of winter they have a great feast, at which all the marriageable girls gather and listen to the music made by the bachelors, who sit under and round the "desire tree," each playing his favourite instrument. As the maiden he loves passes him, the youth plays the louder and the more feelingly. If the girl ignores him and passes on, he knows that she will have none of him; if she steps up to him and lays a flower upon his instrument, he jumps up, takes her by the hand, taking care not to drop the flower, and they wander off into the moonlit woods.

When a Dyak of Borneo would woo the maiden of his heart, he chivalrously helps her in the hardest portions of her uneasy daily toil. If she smiles upon him, never so sweetly, he does not immediately respond, but waits until the next dark night. Then he steals to her house and lightly awakens her as she lies asleep beside her sleeping parents. The parents, if they approve, make no sign, but sleep on—or pretend to. If the girl accepts, she rises and takes from her lover the betel and sweetmeats he has brought her. That seals their betrothal and he departs as he came; neither speaking, nor being spoken to.

"The language of flowers" is, in every way, a dumb, but expressive tongue, more worthy the attention of lovers than it generally receives.

A young lady once had sent her what may be called a "flower letter." In a large, oblong, but shallow box was a series of different blossoms, arranged on a flat bed of damp moss in such fashion and sequence, that, beginning from the left hand, and reading the meaning, as you would read an ordinary letter, a declaration of love and marriage was the interpretation.

The flowers lay in order following: Anacardium, Red Carnation, Peachblossom, Winter Rose, Four-leaved Clover, Browallia, Jamisonii, and lastly, Stephanotis.

Rightly read, the message was: "Alas! for my poor heart, it has a secret love for you. I am your captive, relieve my anxiety. Fly with me; be mine, and if you can bear want, bear with my love, and accompany me to the East, whither I go."

Fortunately the young lady in question, though willing favourably to respond, had a prudent mind. Having also a prudent mother, a spray of "Lady's Slipper" was, by arrangement between mother and daughter, forwarded to the happy man.

This was equivalent to its actual meaning in flower language, "Win me, and wear me."

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A FEW YEARS AGO THE TOP OF MY HEAD WAS ENTIRELY BALD. My father and grandfather were bald-headed. My mother's hair was naturally very thin also. I was quite reconciled to being bald-headed myself. One day, during a trip through Switzerland, I met with a learned elderly gentleman, who, in the course of conversation, asked if I was desirous of possessing a LUXURANT GROWTH OF HAIR UPON MY HEAD. Naturally I was interested, and replied in the affirmative. He thereupon stated to me that he had been a life-long student of chemistry, and that he had made a feature of hirsutal matters. He gave me a formula, and suggested that I have it compounded, which I did upon reaching Geneva, and continued to use the preparation for a short time. In three weeks hair began to assert itself, and within FORTY DAYS my head was quite covered. I supplied some of the preparation to two friends—one of whom was a lady whose hair had been nearly lost—AND THE RESULTS IN EACH CASE WERE ASTOUNDING.

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COMMERCIALS WANT THEM.

A pencil-case will be awarded to each person whose letter is dealt with on this page, or whose suggestion for a title is used.

J. H. G. wishes to know whether it is lawful to keep swans without the permission of the reigning monarch. —Swan law is both ancient and curious. These "birds royal," as they are called, are mentioned in some of the oldest Norman statutes. All wild or semi-wild swans found at sea or in navigable rivers are the property of the Crown just as treasure-trove is. All tame swans within the United Kingdom which are "nicked" belong to the Crown, and to steal them is felony. The penalty for stealing or destroying any swan's eggs is five shillings per egg. An owner of an estate through which private water flows may keep swans on it, and these birds belong to him independently of the rights of the Crown.

W. M. was the other day talking to a bandsman, who told him that a musician of any ability could tell, on playing his instrument, what the weather was likely to be. W. M. is sceptical.-----I have heard other bandsmen say the same thing. When the weather is likely to be dry and fine, the notes which emanate from the recesses of brass instruments are clearer and richer than when rain is coming on. Violinists, too, can tell by the condition of their strings whether wet or dry weather will immediately follow. Of course, although these musical barometers are reliable up to a certain point, they can only forecast very roughly, and I should not advise you to be influenced by a *O* flat blown on a trombone whether you will or will not go for a picnic to-morrow.

W. J.—The ground on which the Embassy of any country stands is, by international law, held to be the territory of that country, but only so long as it is occupied by the Minister or Ambassador. While he is in residence the Ambassador is beyond the law of the country in which he lives, and so are all his staff, even down to his servants, and no arrests may be made within the sacred precincts without the Ambassador's consent. For instance, in the very improbable event of a murder being committed, say, at the Russian Embassy in London, and the Ambassador refusing to permit an arrest, the forcible entry of the police into the Embassy would be just as much an act of war as the forcible invasion of a Russian port by a British man-of-war. Of course, if an Ambassador or any of his suite offends against the law of the country in which he represents his sovereign, the recall or dismissal of the offender can be demanded, and a refusal would be "an unfriendly act." When war has become inevitable between two countries, the final act of peace is handing the Ambassador or Minister his passports. That amounts to a declaration of war, and the precincts of the Embassy then become the territory of the country in which they are situated.

H. B. sends me a sketch of a gate which is of most peculiar design, and which is to be seen at the entrance to Moulton Lodge, Northampton. This novelty is made of cast-iron, and comprises numerous well-known agricultural implements—viz., hedge splasher, peahook, shepherd's crook, hells, sythe, hay fork, three-tined fork, spade, turn-outter, rake and sickle. He asks: "Can any of your numerous readers say if there is a similar gate in this country?" It has been stated that there is only one of its kind.



if there is a similar gate in this country? It has been stated that there is only one of its kind.

A. M. (Tenby) lives twelve miles from a town where a gun is fired at sunset. On a quiet evening he can often hear this gun distinctly, and he wishes to know how long the gun is fired before he hears the report.

At sea level and in ordinary conditions of the atmosphere sound travels at the rate of 1,122ft. a second, therefore, as there are 63,360ft. in twelve miles, it takes a fraction over fifty-six seconds for the sound wave to strike my correspondent's tympanum. If he and the gun were each on the top of a high mountain it would take much longer, for the thinner the air the more slowly sound travels. But if he happened to be at the bottom of the sea in a diving dress, and the gun was fired under water, he would hear the report in one fourth of the time that he does now.

W. F. B. can tell gardening readers what they probably did not know before in regard to keeping cats off flower beds. What he does is to lay a piece of orange peel near the flowers. Cats, he assures me, have a strong antipathy to orange peel and will not come near it.

C. B. A. has laid another little snare for my feet, but it is rather an old one, though perhaps it may be new to many readers of *P.W.* He arranges it this way: Energy cannot be destroyed. Wind up an ordinary clock-spring and put it in acid until it is dissolved. What becomes of the energy used in winding it up? The answer is, "Energy is not destroyed, it is transformed into another kind of 'energy,' and

There are two kinds of "energy," and C.B.A. has mixed them. A slate on a housetop possesses potential or possible energy. Let it loose and it possesses kinetic or active energy, and becomes capable of slaying an inoffensive citizen walking along the street just under it. Now the wound-up spring possesses only potential energy. The work done in winding it up has already been transformed into heat muscular and metallic, for when you wind a clock up your muscles give off a certain amount of heat, and the metal of the spring becomes slightly hotter. As the spring uncoils it exerts precisely the same energy as that which was used to wind it up. The molecules of which it is composed, having been brought closer together, exert the same force in getting farther apart. When the wound-up spring is dissolved in acid, these molecules are split up and enter into combination with the acid, evolving heat in the process. Thus the potential energy of the spring is transformed into chemical energy instead of the kinetic or motion-energy which it would exert if released. But in all cases the energy is exactly the same. Terrible sort of stuff this for hot weather, isn't it?

H. A. M.'s wide experience with schoolmasters is not a record after all. MAGISTRATE is a young lady of seventeen, who has been under at least twenty teachers; while B. E. H. has come under the influence and teaching of twenty-two. P. J. J. goes one better by satisfying me that no fewer than twenty-eight different masters have all taught him something; but A. J. S. knocks out all other records by stating that, although only nineteen, he has come under the influence of no fewer than forty-five teachers in the ten schools in which he has been educated.

AM much indebted to "GEE-GEE" for yet another addition to the thousand and one utilities of P.W. Of course we all know that it won't wash clothes, mend leaky tubes in Belleville boilers, or make hair grow on a worn-out door-mat as some hair restorers are supposed to do. My correspondent has, by the exercise of keen faculties for observation and reasoning, discovered that it is possible to prove by means of P.W. that some goats are possessed of a fine literary taste. It seems that "GEE-GEE" was riding one of his namesakes over Barnes Common the other day, and observed a young lady reading a copy of P.W. When she had read it through from the poem on the front page to the last note on Page 16, she got up and offered it page by page to a goat that was grazing hard by, and the intelligent animal took it page by page and devoured it. Naturally the goat would be sorry that it couldn't read, but anyhow it did its best. Possibly it found some of the Page 4 stuff a trifle hard of digestion, and perhaps one or two of the jokes might have gone the wrong way, but recently that goat has been noticed walking about the common in a most meditative mood, neglecting even to crop the succulent herbage. He is probably trying to find out who killed James Trent.

P. M.—The names of the winners in the school attendance prizes (Nos. 2 and 3) will appear next week.

Once more we have to chronicle a substantial increase in the F.A.F.; but we mustn't let our efforts relax simply because the scheme is going well. Although it is going better than I anticipated, there is no reason whatever why it should not go even better than it is. Whether it will or will not depends entirely upon your individual effort. Is it asking too much to expect you to make this effort? Nine penny stamps in an envelope, addressed to the Secretary of the **FRENCH AIR FUND**, will make you feel all the better.

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